TO

MY MOTHER

ALSO BY VERRIER ELWIN

MONOGRAPHS

The Baiga (1939, Murray), out of print
The Agaria (1942, O U P), out of print
Maria Murder and Suicide (1943, O U P, second edition, 1950)
Folk Tales of Mahakoshal (1944, O U P), out of print
Folk-Songs of Chhattisgarh (1946, O U P), out of print
Myths of Middle India (1949, O U P)
The Muria and their Ghotul (1947, O U P) out of print
Bondo Highlander (1950, O U P)
The Tribal Art of Middle India (1951, O U P)
Tribal Myths of Orissa (1954 O U P)
The Religion of an Indian Tribe (1955 O U P)

GENERAL

The Aboriginals (1943, O U P, second edition, 1944) out of print
Motley (1954, Orient Longmans)
A Philosophy for NEFA (1957, NEFA Administration)
India's North East Frontier (O U P), in the press

NOVELS

Phulmat of the Hills (1937, Murray), out of print
A Cloud that's Dragonish (1938, Murray) out of print

WITH SHAMRAO HIVALE

Songs of the Forest (1935 Allen & Unwin)
Folk Songs of the Maikal Hills (1944 O U P), out of print

LEAVES FROM THE JUNGLE

LIFE IN A GOND VILLAGE

VERRIER ELWIN

Second Edition

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
1958

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FOREWORD TO THE SECOND EDITION

It is over twenty years since this Diary of 'life in a Gond village' was first published and exactly a quarter of a century since I became engrossed in the cause of tribal India. This is a long time and reading the book on the eve of its republication I find that there are a number of things which now require a word of explanation. There are for example mysterious references to some quarrel with the police and with Bishops, for which no reason is given; there is a religious background to my adventures which would not be there if I were to write a similar book today. A little autobiography therefore is necessary to put the story in its proper setting especially since (as I will show) it was not possible for me to tell it in its entirety in 1936 when the original edition was first published by John Murray.

I came to India in November 1927 and I have often been asked why. There were a number of reasons. At Oxford Indian friends had roused in me an enthusiasm for the non-violent idealism of Mahatma Gandhi, the internationalist culture of Tagore and the elevating symbolism of Indian mysticism. I knew that India was a poor country and much as I looked forward to a donnish career at Oxford I had begun to feel that the academic life was not enough. I was filled with a desire to do something to make reparation for what my country and my class had done to India. From childhood the ideal not only of a life of service, but a life of adventure had been held up before me. My father

had been an explorer in the wilds of Africa My mother had been nearly eaten in a cannibal village I could hardly expect such privileges in India, yet even at this date, it was obvious that this was the country with which I was most akin and which would offer many adventures in the realm of the mind and spirit.

I did not want to be a 'missionary in the ordinary sense of the word, but I was greatly interested in the monastic life It so happened that about this time there was founded in Poona a monastic Ashram on liberal Christian lines which associated Indian and European members on terms of complete equality (a rather unusual thing in those days) and which was more interested in scholarship than in proselytizing In joining it, my main interest was to study the relations between Christianity and Hinduism and to see how far Christianity in India could put on a more appropriate oriental garb In Poona we lived in simple Indian style, wore khadi dress went barefoot or in sandals sat and slept on the floor, ate Indian food We built a beautiful little Church in the style of a Hindu temple and its services followed the model of the Eastern Orthodox Church and had various oriental elements. I myself wrote a number of small books to illustrate the intimate relations between Eastern and Western mysticism one of them *Christian Dhyana* compared the teachings of Yoga with those of the anonymous fourteenth-century mystic who wrote *The Cloud of Unknowing* another expounded the ideas of Richard Rolle in terms of Indian Bhakti religion, a third tried to show how St Francis of Assisi fitted into the Indian scene I was then a clergyman of the Church of England.

In January 1928 there occurred an event which was

to disturb and change my whole life I visited the Sabarmati Ashram and met Mahatma Gandhi

At this time, the National Movement of India had risen to a pitch of sincerity and devotion that has rarely been equalled in the political upheavals of the world. The Ashram itself, standing on the tall banks of the Sabarmati River, was the home of some hundreds of people marked by that quiet and disciplined devotion to hard work and to the poor which has always been characteristic of the best type of Congressman Among them Gandhiji walked in almost unearthly dignity and beauty That was the first thing that struck me about him—his beauty, and the inner spiritual power that transformed his frail body and filled the entire place with kindliness and love

From that moment I was doomed. Always a sympathetic fellow traveller, I now became an ardent disciple. I took up spinning; I hoisted the Congress flag over the Poona Ashram, my sermons became a mixture of Christian and Gandhian ideals, I wrote a booklet called *Christ and Satyagraha* to show, contrary to the accepted ecclesiastical tradition of the day (that Christians were bound to accept the established order), that in fact they had more often been of the opposition and that there was no reason why they should not take part in a movement for freedom which was based on such essentially Christian ideals as Truth and Non violence. All this, somewhat naturally, was not regarded with any very great enthusiasm by the authorities of either State or Church.

Nothing brought home to me the subservience of the Church to the Government of the day more than the fact that when I invited Reginald Reynolds to give a

lecture in the Ashram on the Gandhian philosophy it was the Archdeacon and not the Commissioner of Police who put me on the carpet It says much for the Christa Seva Sangh that it did not allow the constant pressure from the Church leaders and increasing irritations from the CID to turn it aside from what it felt to be right. With the full approval of the other members for example I entertained Mr Subhas Chandra Bose and at the end of 1929 I was allowed to accept an invitation from Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel to visit Gujarat and make an inquiry into police repression of the No-Tax Campaign that had been started there This campaign was on a very wide scale and the Government had taken strong measures to counter it so strong indeed that in many places the whole population had migrated into the neighbouring Baroda State I visited over sixty villages in five talukas—Anand Nadiad Borsad Bardoli and Jalalpur—and wrote a report which appeared first in the *Bombay Chronicle* and later as a small booklet *In the Deserted Villages of Gujarat* In this I appealed to the Christian Government to put all they know of the principles of Christ into the conduct of public affairs in Gujarat so that whatever the issue of the present struggle may be they will have preserved intact the authority of Law the sanctity of Justice and left behind no heritage of bitter memories

I spent long periods in the Sabarmati Ashram and during the following year it gradually became evident that I was drifting away from my friends in Poona and was an increasing embarrassment to them I decided to leave the Christa Seva Sangh and start on my own

But not entirely on my own While I was at Poona the Ashram attracted to its membership a number of

remarkable Indians among whom was one who was to be my life long friend and ally This was Shamrao Hivale whose name appears frequently in these pages and who needs therefore a few words of introduction

Shamrao was born in Madhe near Sholapur and when this Diary opens was about thirty years of age. He was educated at the Wilson High School in Bombay and at the Rajaram College Kolhapur his brother Dr B P Hivale is well known in western India as the founder of a flourishing College in Ahmednagar Shamrao accompanied me on the Gujarat inquiry in 1929 and we have worked together ever since except for a brief interlude in 1931 when he went to England to study at Mirfield for Holy Orders. This project he abandoned on hearing that I had left the Christa Seva Sangh and when Gandhiji came to London for the Round Table Conference he joined his party and travelled back to India with him.

Shamrao has an extraordinary warmth and humanity about him and within a very short time of our arrival in Karanjia he had established himself as the Chhota Bhai the little brother of the people and as their guide philosopher and friend. It soon became the custom for any tribesman who was in trouble to go to Chhota Bhai for help and he has brought comfort and re assurance into many thousands of lives. Once when an old woman lay dying she would not see any of her relations but called continually for Shamrao One day a Gond friend said to him Before you came here the moustaches of those who oppressed us turned up to the sky but now they droop to the ground He has never been an outsider he is never superior never looks down on anyone or tries to uplift him. To him every

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individual is a world and he accepts each child or growing youth or poor old woman not as a 'case' but as a human personality, a sacred thing to be respected and loved in whose sorrows and anxieties he himself must share He is always accessible and in Karanjia used to be compared to a Hindu widow (old style) at the beck and call of everyone who wanted him no task being too small too humble or too unpleasant.

Some years ago he wrote a vivid monograph on a tribe allied to the Gonds *The Pardhans of the Upper Narbada Valley* For he has the advantage over many professional anthropologists in having the complete confidence of his people in being able to live among them and watch their fortunes year after year in speaking their language perfectly and in having a great store of imaginative sympathy in his heart. If I have sometimes gently pulled his leg in the Diary that follows that is the privilege of many years of friendship

I was of course deprived of his advice during 1931 when I was trying to make up my mind what I should do Some of my friends wanted me to follow in the footsteps of C F Andrews as a free lance semi political worker I myself had an idea of going to live among the untouchables and trying to do something for them—it will be remembered that untouchability was a very live issue at that time Then one day as I was driving through the streets of Ahmedabad with Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Seth Jamnalal Bajaj I heard for the first time in my life—from the lips of Jamnalalji—the magic word 'Gond He urged me to go to the Central Provinces and take up the cause of the tribes who were then almost entirely neglected We discussed the matter with Gandhiji and he approved

In October, therefore, I set out on a long tour with Acharya Kripalani, partly to search for a suitable place for a settlement in the Gond area of Betul and Chhindwara, and partly to spread the message of khadi and the Gandhian ideal in general. We travelled widely in the Central and United Provinces, as they were then called, pursued everywhere by the police and reported, generally incorrectly, by the CID. In Betul and Chhindwara, official opposition was so strong that none of the local landlords, sympathetic as they were, dared to give us land. We completed the tour at the end of December and went down to Bombay to welcome Gandhiji—and Shamrao—on their return from England.

What happened then is still vivid in my memory and I will quote an account of it that I wrote at the time, for Gandhiji's arrest had a profound effect both on my own thinking and on my later fortunes.

Gandhiji was staying in a house called Mani Bhuvan and he invited Shamrao and myself to stay with him there. There was great excitement in the city, the Viceroy had finally rejected the Congress offer of peace, and the arrest of national leaders was expected at any moment.

'But when we reached Mani Bhuvan and climbed to the roof we found a great serenity in astonishing contrast to the crowds and turmoil outside. The roof is a charming place. Low tents have been erected, and there are palms and plants; at least 300 people can gather there. It is cool and you can see the stars. Bapu was sitting at the wheel quietly spinning. He had already begun his weekly silence. I carried on a one-sided conversation with him and he wrote down his questions and replies. Shamrao thanked him for his

kindness to him on the voyage Then Shamrao and I retired to the smaller tent and Bapu lay down about three yards from us while some thirty others lay on the roof under the canvas shelter Mrs Gandhi and Mirabehn gave us a delicious supper of dates nuts and fruit *But I could not sleep I felt I had to keep vigil* and for hours I was under those splendid stars that rose tier upon tier above me while beside me Bapu slept like a child committed to his Father s hands I thought of Christ going up to Jerusalem his eyes filled with determination and courage and I seemed to see the Spirit of Christ travelling the centuries like a bright sword turned against all wrong and injustice Among these sleeping friends so dear to us brave pure hearted sincere the spirit of Love was manifest and uncon querable

'*At last I lay down on a hastily improvised bed and* fell into a heavy sleep It seemed as if I had slept all my life when suddenly like the coming of a dream there was a stir and a whisper *The police have come"* We started up and I saw what I will never forget—a fully uniformed Commissioner of Police at the foot of Bapu s bed and Bapu just waking a little bewildered looking old fragile and rather pathetic with the mists of sleep still on his face ' Mr Gandhi it is my duty to arrest you A beautiful smile of welcome broke out on Bapu's face and now he looked young strong and confident. He made signs to show that he was keeping silence The Commissioner smiled and with great courtesy said I should like you to be ready in half an hour s time It was five minutes past three. Bapu looked at his watch and the Commissioner said ' Ah the famous watch!" *And they both laughed*

heartily Bapu took a pencil and wrote I will be ready to come with you in half an hour The Commissioner laid his hand on Bapu s shoulder with a gesture so full of affection that I thought it was an embrace until I realized that it was the formal token of arrest Bapu then cleaned his teeth and retired for a moment. The door was guarded but all of us who were on the roof sat round in a circle I looked out onto the road where some had been keeping all night vigil and where a little crowd very quiet and orderly had collected but there were no special police precautions Bapu then sat in the midst of us for the prayers and we sang together the Song of the true Vaishnava. Then Bapu took pencil and paper and wrote a few messages some last instructions to his followers and a letter to Sardar Vallabhbhai which was as follows "Infinite is God s mercy" (these were the first words to be written after his arrest) Please tell the people never to swerve from truth and non violence Never to flinch but to give their lives and all to win Swaraj" He then wrote a short note and gave it to me

"My dear Elwyn

I am so glad you have come. I would like you yourself to tell your countrymen that I love them even as I love my own countrymen I have never done anything towards them in hatred or malice and God willing I shall never do anything in that manner in future. I am acting no differently towards them now from what I have done under similar circumstances towards my own kith and kin.

with love
yours
M K. Gandhi"

'Then Bapu stood up to take farewell It was a strange sight The police at the door, Mirabehn and Devadas bustling to and fro with the baggage which was already packed Bapu surrounded by his friends many of them in tears Mrs Gandhi with tears running down her cheeks said ' Can't you take me with you? Every one in turn touched his feet and when I said goodbye he pulled my ear with a beautiful smile and gave me quite a good slap on the side of my face He was full of joy and laughter Then followed by the whole company he went downstairs But Shamrao and I watched from the roof The tiny figure got into the car and the crowd surged round it *It was a wonderful tribute to India's non violence that there were only a few policemen and they were able to be in the midst* of the crowd without fear of danger Just at that moment a message came to say that Sardar Vallabhbhai the Congress President was also arrested And then the crowd scattered as the car bearing the very soul of India drove away through the dark and deserted streets

Among the instructions scribbled for Mahadeo Desai after the arrest was one asking me to go to the North West Frontier Province to discover what was really happening there Disquieting reports had filtered down to Bombay about the severe repression of the Red Shirt Movement and *since no journalists were admitted and all press reports were strictly censored* there was great concern about the fate of the brave warlike Pathans who had so surprisingly adopted Gandhiji's non violent technique The following week therefore Shamrao and I left Bombay for Peshawar

There is no room here to tell of our adventures which were exciting nor of our discoveries which were

little to the credit of the local police and military We visited Kohat and Utmanzai and a number of other villages and on the last day went up the Khyber Pass On our return I was arrested my things were searched, and we were deported from the Province under the escort of a dozen armed policemen

One thing that gave me great satisfaction was that I managed to hide all my notes as well as certain papers which would have brought some of the Peshawar people into trouble had they been found in a packet of Force This stood like Poe's Purloined Letter in full view on a table in our room and though the police searchers went through everything else with humiliating attention, they ignored the innocent looking packet of breakfast cereal I carried it down in triumph to Bombay and was able to write and publish a report in consequence This was immediately declared forfeit to His Majesty and though it was reissued in London later for many years even I myself was unable to get a copy

Now in Bombay we had to face another problem Shamrao had returned from England and sacrificed his higher education to work for the tribal people My own inclination was in the same direction But now, and specially since Gandhiji's arrest and my own deportation a good deal of pressure was put on me to enter politics. For example at this time the Congress was planning to appoint a series of Presidents which would include members of every community, and Jamnalalji asked me if I would be willing to become President when it was the turn of an Englishman to occupy that high office. It would not, he pointed out, mean a great deal of work, for I would certainly be arrested and imprisoned within a week. I told him

'Then Bapu stood up to take farewell It was a strange sight The police at the door, Mirabehn and Devadas bustling to and fro with the baggage which was already packed Bapu surrounded by his friends many of them in tears Mrs Gandhi with tears running down her cheeks said ' Can't you take me with you?" Every one in turn touched his feet and when I said goodbye he pulled my ear with a beautiful smile and gave me quite a good slap on the side of my face He was full of joy and laughter Then followed by the whole company he went downstairs But Shamrao and I watched from the roof The tiny figure got into the car and the crowd surged round it It was a wonderful tribute to India s non violence that there were only a few policemen and they were able to be in the midst of the crowd without fear of danger Just at that moment a message came to say that Sardar Vallabhbhai the Congress President was also arrested And then the crowd scattered as the car bearing the very soul of India drove away through the dark and deserted streets'

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Satpura Hills. Go a hair's breadth from its tail and there is Karanjia.

As described in the Diary we were fortunate to find a little hill overlooking the Pilgrim's Way that goes up to Amarkantak eleven miles distant where the Narbada River rises and here we built the small huts of mud wattle and thatch which constituted the Ashram. In those early days all round us lay the vast mysterious forest whose silence was broken at night only by the roar of the tiger or the high melancholy call of the deer.

The Ashram looked exactly like part of the village which lay around and below it for it was our policy from the first to build everything in the Gond style. All the houses were of mud and thatch the walls covered with Gond decorations and there was no furniture which could not be matched in the village itself. At the same time the Ashram was different in that it attempted to demonstrate what a village might be like. The huts were clean and well ventilated everywhere there were flowers and fruit trees, proper houses for poultry and cattle and many pits for refuse and manure. There was a good system of pit latrines. The Gond visitor therefore found himself perfectly at home and yet at the same time even without a word being spoken had the chance to learn something that he could take back to his own village.

Entering the settlement by a long flight of steps you came first to a tiny mud chapel of St Francis which was used by the Christian members of the Ashram. The Ashram was founded on a principle of complete religious equality and toleration it was not of course a missionary society its members were drawn from all communities but no one was asked to surrender the

that I was willing and I have sometimes wondered what would have happened if I had gone through with it.

But when Shamrao and I talked it over we came to the conclusion that this was not really our line I have always been a little doubtful of the value of the intervention of European political amateurs in matters at which they are not expert And so we decided to keep to our original plan of going into the Gond country in the Central Provinces

As I had been unable to get land in Betul and most of my friends were now in jail I asked the Bishop of Nagpur (for it must be remembered I was still a loyal if somewhat heretical member of the Church of England) for his advice This was Bishop Wood a brave strong man with a sincere affection for the tribes and an equal devotion to the British Government His biographer says of him How fully he had won the confidence of Government is evident from the fact that in his third year in India he was awarded the Kaiser i Hind Medal In his dealings with us he fully justified that confidence

The Bishop recommended Karanjia a Gond village in the Maikal Hills as particularly suitable for me Of the last five Europeans to stay there he pointed out with relish four had died within a year This sounded very much what we wanted and so on the 28th of January 1932 Shamrao and I started out and I began the diary recorded in the following pages

It is easy to find the position of the little village of Karanjia even on a map of the world Trace the course of the great Narbada River from its mouth on the west coast to its sacred source amid the eastern spurs of the

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tenets of his faith, or to cease its practice. We did not, in fact, aim at a syncretistic unifying of theologies, but rather at demonstrating that it was possible for believers in different religions to live and work together as one family. Our Mussalman was a good Mussalman; our Hindu members observed the tenets of their religion; and in the same way the Christian members tried to follow, however imperfectly, the ideals of St Francis of Assisi.

The Chapel of St Francis was a tiny building in the middle of a large court, in the front part of which was the library, office and sitting rooms The whole was surrounded by a high wall In front of the chapel was a flagstaff (essential to any place of worship in the Gondwana) carrying the saffron flag of renunciation, and at its foot on a little cow dunged platform grew the sacred *tulsi* tree Round the chapel was the flower-garden, in memory of St Francis' wish that gardens should be made so that all who saw them should re member the Eternal Beauty In front of the whole building was the place of the morning and evening prayer, on the edge of the hill, and from here there was a wonderful view of forest, valley and mountain

You went along the hill, which was sheltered by trees, many of them laden with sweet smelling flowers, and reached the dispensary—*Premayatna*, the House of Compassion This was well equipped with medicines and villagers came to it from a radius of forty miles It was the only dispensary along a main road of seventy five miles, but there was a small Government dispensary across country twenty miles away

Next came the Refectory for resident members which again, following the Gond style, was made up of three

little huts—a kitchen dining room and store-house Round the Refectory was a vegetable garden and fruit trees were planted in the neighbourhood of all the buildings—mango plantain papaya orange fig sour lime guava Next door was the *Mitralaya* House of Friendship where in patients pilgrims and other visitors could stay and opposite was a chicken run and the House of the Bull where an attempt was made to improve the breed of the village livestock Farther along the hill was the *Ajib khana* or Place of Wonders in other words the Museum a very popular building and then came the largest of our establishments the *Vidyamandir* literally Temple of Knowledge or in plain English the School There was room for fifty boarders and a hundred others The school was co-educational and a very fair proportion of girls attended Here also was the carpenter s shop and the tailoring department Beyond the school the hill became wild and thickly wooded and the little path wound in and out of trees till it reached a gate beyond which no one might go without permission This was the Leper Refuge where fifteen or sixteen lepers lived and received treatment in a beautiful little home with a garden in which they took great pride

This was the centre Round it hidden away in remote valleys or in the midst of the forest there were eight branch Ashrams within a radius of as many miles. Each of these had its resident worker school Hindi library and small dispensary fitted with the simplest medicines. Once a week all the workers gathered at Karanjia for conference. Model classes were given and the plan of work for the coming week decided This was necessary because the workers were themselves

tenets of his faith, or to cease its practice. We did not, in fact, aim at a syncretistic unifying of theologies, but rather at demonstrating that it was possible for believers in different religions to live and work together as one family. Our Mussalman was a good Mussalman; our Hindu members observed the tenets of their religion; *and in the same way the Christian members tried to* follow, however imperfectly, the ideals of St Francis of Assisi.

The Chapel of St Francis was a tiny building in the middle of a large court, in the front part of which was the library, office and sitting rooms. The whole was surrounded by a high wall. In front of the chapel was a flagstaff (essential to any place of worship in the Gondwana) carrying the saffron flag of renunciation, and at its foot on a little cow-dunged platform grew the sacred *tulsi* tree. Round the chapel was the flower-garden, in memory of St Francis' wish that gardens should be made so that all who saw them should remember the Eternal Beauty. In front of the whole building was the place of the morning and evening prayer, on the edge of the hill, and from here there was a wonderful view of forest, valley and mountain.

You went along the hill, which was sheltered by trees, many of them laden with sweet smelling flowers, and reached the dispensary—*Premayatna*, the House of Compassion. This was well equipped with medicines and villagers came to it from a radius of forty miles It was the only dispensary along a main road of seventy-five miles, but there was a small Government dispensary across country twenty miles away.

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if he has learnt a little carpentry or tailoring he can make a few things for sale or at least mend his clothes and so make them last longer and he will not waste his money (if his education has been on proper lines) on weddings funerals litigation and caste-dinners We found that one of the great difficulties in improving the lot of the villager was that as soon as we helped him to make a little money he poured it away on some tribal extravagance Here caste had proved a great curse to the tribes and large sums of money were wasted in expensive penalty dinners for every kind of fault.

My use of the word caste will surprise those who in Assam for example have been accustomed to regard the tribes as altogether outside the caste-system But the Gonds of the Mandla District were largely de-tribalized they had lost their own language worshipped Hindu gods dressed like the ordinary peasants of the neighbourhood It was taboo for them to weave Their culture was concentrated in the dance and song at which they were very good. And as the reader will note the Gond villages had a number of non tribals living in them there were Mussalmans, Hindu merchants liquor vendors landlords moneylenders and others. We could hardly have chosen a less favourable place for the preservation of museum specimens', had that really been our intention When we went to Karanjia I had never—so far as I remember—opened a book on anthropology our interest was entirely humanitarian

I have had to give the political as I shall shortly give the religious, background of our history for a special reason It will be noted that there is a gap in the Diary between the 15th of June and the 1st of November 1932.

villagers without any very advanced education and in this way they not only took their part in the fight against illiteracy but they also trained themselves to be leaders of their own people There were between three and four hundred children in the schools most of them belonging to the Gond and other tribes

The prevention of disease is of primary importance in India In every school we had regular courses of lectures about the human body sanitation and the common diseases Anti malarial measures are not very successful in a forest area since short of cutting down the trees it is impossible to destroy the breeding places of mosquitoes but we managed to sell a good many mosquito nets (a real triumph) and of course the distribution of quinine never ceased Water borne diseases were also a constant menace and we had a programme of well making in villages where the water supply was bad Another great enemy was venereal diseases and simple sex teaching was of great importance

At this time therefore we saw things very simply *we had to work for the health of the community* we had to see that there was enough food and that it was properly cooked then we had to help the people to get more money and finally we had to give them sufficient knowledge and of the right kind to enable them to use their leisure properly The first of these aims is secured by dispensaries health propaganda and the cleaning of villages the second by the improvement of agriculture and the education of girls specially if they can be given some training in the domestic arts and sciences. The third and fourth are to no small extent the fruits of education The educated Gond is less likely to be swindled when he takes his goods to market

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During this period, I went to Europe, partly for family reasons but mainly to do something to acquaint people in the West with what was happening in India. I contacted sympathizers with India in France and Italy, and in England gave lectures and met a number of those who we thought might be able to help towards a speedy solution, including Lord Irwin and Lord Sankey, then Lord Chancellor. The Secretary of State for India, Sir Samuel Hoare, however, refused to see me, it would be improper, he said, for him to do so, in view of my criticisms of his administration

But Sir Samuel was not content with this, for when the time came for my return to India, I was informed by the Passport Office that '*in accordance with a request made by the Secretary of State for India*' I could not be given passport facilities for my return to what I already regarded as my home. I was ultimately *only* allowed to return on condition that I would not take part in any kind of politics would not associate (as far as possible) with persons engaged in political agitation, and would refrain from writing against the Government I agreed to this because I felt that our work for the tribal people was *for us, more important than* amateur interference in political affairs. Although some of my friends notably C F Andrews thought I was wrong, *Gandhiji himself approved* and I remember *Sir Francis* Younghusband was good enough to say a few years later 'I will always be grateful *to Sam Hoare* for *one thing* at least, that he forced Elwin from politics to poetry

But at the time these restrictions were irksome enough. When I *wrote Leaves from the Jungle*, I was still under police surveillance and living under the obligations imposed by my undertaking. This meant that I had

to omit many curious and even exciting incidents, and readers of the first edition must sometimes have wondered what my occasional references to police raids and conflicts with the Church were about. Another result was that I had to give a rather inaccurate picture of those early days, which were much less peaceful than the reader would suppose

For example all that the Diary has to say of the first week of February 1932 is that we were settling into our goat-shed and fighting fleas In fact we were up against a *more formidable enemy* I received a letter from the Deputy Commissioner which I have always regarded as a little masterpiece of official brevity 'The Commissioner' he wrote 'has asked me to inform you that in view of your political record we do not want you in this District.' I replied that we were doing nothing worthy of death or bonds and would remain until he removed us by force. We posted sentries to warn us of the approach of the police, but when they did actually come on the 2nd of March they decided to let us be

The same week however, on the day we opened the Dispensary I got another letter, this time from the Bishop telling me that the Commissioner had applied for my deportation from India and demanding that I should take an Oath of Allegiance to the King Emperor and that I should 'separate myself absolutely' from the Congress Party There is no hint in the Diary of the long discussions Shamrao and I had about this, I naturally refused both demands. And in the first edition I considerably modified the manuscript account of an interview, on the 10th of May 1932 with some clerical visitors, but I have restored the original in this new

version, for it is the kind of incident that reveals why it was we had to leave the Church

Nor do I refer anywhere in the Diary to one of my preoccupations of the first months in Karanjia when seated on the ground before my typewriter I tapped out with two fingers a book called *Truth about India* which was published in London and helped to bring home to people there the justice of India's cause

And towards the end of the Diary in the entry for *the 2nd of November 1935 which records the behaviour* of our Rhode Islander cocks there is no reference to the writing of what was for me a momentous letter to the Metropolitan in Calcutta announcing to him 'my decision to be no longer a member of the Church of England either as a priest or a communicant' To explain this I must say a little not in any spirit of controversy but simply to make the story clear, about religion

Looking back I find it curious to recall that even when I was in the Christa Seva Sangh I took the same attitude towards religious propaganda that I now under the Prime Minister's inspiration take towards any other interference in the life and culture of the tribal people 'I am alarmed' the Prime Minister has said 'when I see how anxious people are to shape others according to their own image or likeness and to impose on them their particular way of living We are welcome to our way of life but why impose it on others? There would be more peace in the world if people were to desist from imposing their way of living on other people and countries' This was the first and fundamental cause of conflict with the Church that I refused to make converts.

At the same time, I was deeply, almost passionately religious and was specially attached to the mystical aspects of the Catholic religion and to that Christian Neo-Platonism which in its attachment to the Good, the True and the Beautiful, *rises* above communal and creedal restrictions But a Neo-Platonic attitude is not easily reconcilable with Catholic orthodoxy, which claims absolute and exclusive truth for its teachings My contact *with* Mahatma Gandhi and his followers, however, apart from anything else, made it impossible to believe that there was only one way to Heaven

It is not surprising *that* these ideas did not commend themselves to the ecclesiastical authorities, and from the time I left the Christa Seva Sangh, we were in constant conflict with them. At the same time, my own ideas were changing Long before, I had found it impossible to believe that salvation was confined to *only* one reli gion, gradually I *came* to question the very foundations of that religion There is no doubt that the alliance of the Church of England with the *British* Imperialism of the day *and* the support it gave to the suppression of the National Movement did much to shake my confidence in it. The entire missionary enterprise became more and more distasteful to me But the thing went deeper than that.

I once had a talk with the famous theologian Bishop Gore, who himself was at one time widely attacked for his liberal views. I expressed difficulty in accepting various miracles supposed to have been performed by the medieval saints and questioned certain passages in the Bible '*All this*, my dear boy,' he said, 'is nothing The real snag in the Christian, or any religion, is the belief in God. If you can swallow God, you can swallow

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It will now, however, be clear that for twenty years I have belonged to no religious body and in fact have held no religious faith of any kind

And yet perhaps my attitude to life cannot be called altogether irreligious. I have a sincere respect for all true religion and I was deeply moved for example, when I visited recently the Buddhist monastery at Tawang and found simple tribal people revealing in their daily lives the virtues of compassion sympathy, gentleness and universal friendliness taught by the Lord Buddha. I have learnt much from a study of the sacred books of the Hindus. The true ideals of Christ are desperately needed in a world in danger of self extermination through violence Many of Mahatma Gandhi's teachings sank far into my heart and mind, and I have tried to practise some of them though with out much success throughout my life This is why I have agreed to this new edition of *Leaves from the Jungle* I no longer hold the faith that inspired me during the four years it describes yet those years were part of my life and represent something real and vital in it

A final thing that strikes me as I re read the pages of the Diary that follows is that I seem to have spent much of my time falling ill I attribute this to the fact that in those days I was a non smoker Since I took to the cheroot, I have not had a single attack of malaria, and my health improved enormously in later years

In 1936 we moved from Karanjia to another village There was no chapel in our new settlement. We became interested in anthropology, or rather in what Haddon once called philanthropology We changed the name of our little society to the Tribal Welfare

anything' I began to find it difficult to swallow all sorts of theological, mythological and so-called historical ideas and facts and I came to the conclusion that it was no longer honest for me to remain in the Church As early as December 1932 I wrote to the Bishop of Nagpur that I would not apply for a licence to function as a clergyman Three years later I informed the Metropolitan that I did not regard myself as even an ordinary member of the Church In 1936 I visited England and after consulting Archbishop Temple who had always treated me with the greatest sympathy I signed what is called a 'Deed of Relinquishment' under the Clerical Disabilities Act of 1870, whereby I relinquished 'all rights, privileges advantages and exemptions of my *office as by law belonging to it'*

I have given a very brief account of what was in fact a long complicated and sometimes painful story but I have never regretted this passage in my life's history The act of relinquishment brought me a hitherto undreamt-of intellectual freedom it adjusted many complexes and inhibitions it was a kind of conversion in reverse integrating me and filling me with new life Now I was free to devote myself to the task of scientific inquiry and to the service of the tribal people in the spirit of science No single act in my whole life has brought me greater happiness

It has been necessary to refer to this even at the risk of giving pain to some of my old friends for otherwise the re-issue of this book which has a certain religious background, might well give a wrong idea of my present position and outlook, indeed in the press I am still sometimes called a missionary, a circumstance which must be as embarrassing to the missionaries as to myself

and Research Unit and reconstituted it. I spent a lot of time in Bastar and later, in the lovely hills of Orissa. At the end of 1953 I was called to the urgent and fascinating task of acting as Adviser for Tribal Affairs to the North-East Frontier Agency, and at the same time I became legally what I had been so long in spirit, an Indian citizen.

Someday I may be able to tell the story of the twenty years since 1936 I hope so, for they have been happy, wonderful years, and they have never been happier than they are today.

Shillong

V. E.

PRELUDE

I

PANDA BABA is a celebrated Gond magician and he looks it. He does not actually wear gaiters but there is a sort of gaiter nimbus about those bare legs of his He has a significant little stoop and an expression of partly veiled importance as though he certainly knew more than he cared to tell He lives in a tiny house in a sheltered valley two miles from Karanjia red cliffs on one side and on the other forest climbing up the hills His house is adorned with many symbols of his sacred calling—whips of horse-hair hang beside spiked iron scourges and sharp-pointed rods for thrusting through your cheek or tongue during the ecstatic dance On the floor are wooden shoes liberally served with iron spikes and in front of a little flagstaff in the middle of his courtyard is a glowing coal some marigolds and a bunch of peacock s feathers. There is a college of young magicians who are being trained by Panda Baba in the elements of his art. Panda Baba himself has great style in his more inspired moments he has the air of one who might at any moment sail in an egg shell make a straw his mast a cobweb all his cloth and pass unseen He is believed to be in the confidence of all the chief Spirits of the Gond Otherworld Thakur Deo that old old deity with a tongue nine yards long whispers him in the ear He is under *the special* patronage of Mother Earth He is on easy terms with all the local ghosts and is not afraid even of the

Man was made for Joy and Woe;
And when this we rightly know
Through the world we safely go.
Joy and Woe are woven fine,
A Clothing for the Soul divine;
Under every grief and pine
Runs a joy with silken twine.

BLAKE

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demi-Atlas of our little world, the Sub-Inspector of Police.

Such a man is, of course, a great temptation to any anthropologist. Panda Baba will not be able to tell you much about the statistics of the business, that there are, for example, three million Gonds in India, that only a few of these are literate, and that their crime record is amazingly low, nor does he know that Ptolemy called his ancestors the 'leaf-clad Gondali', *nor that the Ain i Akbari, that delightful record of* Akbar's reign, said of them that they were 'dutiful subjects and very laborious. They tame lions, so as to make them do anything they please, and many wonderful stories are told of them.' Akbar's chroniclers do not *record these stories, but the loss to history is not so* great as might be supposed, for Panda Baba can supply them. Take him out of the cramping environment of actual facts, as depressing to a good man's soul as the Forest Laws are to his body, and he will be able to give you an exact, a *photographic account* of the vast ages before history began. He knows far more about the Creation than the Book of Genesis or even than Charles Darwin. Beside him, Mr H. G. Wells is a mere amateur. The world was made differently and in a *much more interesting manner*. Like this.

At first all was water, and the Great God sat on a lotus leaf in the middle of the ocean. One day the *Great God bathed himself, and out of the dirt from* his body he made a crow, and sent him out to search for something dry. The crow searched and searched for six months, but he could find no resting place until he came upon the great tortoise, Chakramal Chhatri, who

was standing with one foot on the bottom of the sea his head reaching to the clouds

The crow settled on his head and told him of his long search So Chakramal Chhatri sank deep down into the sea and found Nal Raj and Nal Rani sitting on the floor of the ocean with their faces to the sun resting after they had swallowed the earth The mighty tortoise seized them by the neck and made them give him a tiny grain and this he sent with the crow back to the Great God Out of this grain with the help of Pawan Dassorie the Spirit of the Wind the Great God made the earth. Soon on the earth countless god lings appeared After them the trees of the forest came into being and then the Cow Mother and at last Man

With the coming of Man arose the problem of food and so Annadeo who is a male version of Proserpine came to provide it. To him sacrifice was necessary and the first sacrifice of all was a young child Sri Bhadavan who lives in the roofs of houses used to help him to turn every grain into two four or a hundred. But Annadeo is now grown thin and falls to the ground in fits though at another time Panda Baba told me that Annadeo had left the forest altogether When the rail way came the God of Food took a ticket for Bombay and nowadays he lives there and has grown fat again and makes the city people fat

Panda Baba has two great heroes. One of them is Rai Linga king of the forest and ancestor of the Gonds The other is Lakshmanjati brother of Sri Rama Both heroes are alike in possessing the great and mysterious power of chastity which no trial can vanquish and which gives them a superhuman strength. Both are unjustly put to death and both return to life after

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today they live the peacock splendour of their reign long forgotten in great poverty but still bearing traces in them of their long history There are moreover still a few Gond Rajas and great landlords. For example the Raja of Kawardha State is a Gond so are the rulers of Sakti and Sarangarh Two of the great zemindaris of Bilaspur are in possession of Gonds and among the hills of Chhindwara there are seven estates held by hereditary Gond chieftains.

Panda Baba is a very busy man He is always in demand One day he must go and perform the Bida ceremony at the sowing of the crops another day he takes a little cart and offerings of young chickens to the borders of the village to cast disease out of it Once he came and asked me for a little dung from our rabbit run He wanted to touch the feet of a newly born child with it so that the boy would run as fast as a hare He is a naturopath though he says that the jungle remedies are not so efficacious in this Kali Yug this Age of Iron as they used to be

> Of all green wounds I know the remedies
> In men or cattle be they stung with snakes
> Or charmed with powerful words of wicked art
> Or be they love-sick or through too much heat
> Grown wild or lunatic their eyes or ears
> Thickened with misty film of dulling rheum
> These I can cure

But Panda's power does not derive from the same source as Fletcher's Clorin for he is a married man

Panda Baba is naturally an authority on agriculture though he does not really care to rend the bosom of Mother Earth his patroness with the iron plough At the Phag Festival he busies himself in rousing the spirits

having been burnt for many days in a great fire For over the sinless death has no power Panda Baba considers Lakshman superior to Sri Rama because after all Rama was a married man and so things were fairly easy for him To the Gond though he reveres with his whole being those who can do without it, life is impossible without romantic love I once found even Panda Baba a long drum in his hands dancing ecstatically at the end of a night's festivities and singing this remarkable ditty

> *As I lay in my bed*
> I was bitten by the bugs
> All night I lay awake
> Thinking of you

Once we reach the realm of actual history Panda Baba is less sure of himself and it is necessary to turn to the text books to supplement his inspired inventions According to them the Gonds (who speak a Dravidian tongue allied to Tamil and Kannada) came up by the south perhaps by way of the Godavari River and gradually spread all over the hills of the Central Provinces By the fourteenth century Gond kingdoms were established in Betul Chhindwara Mandla and Chanda and there is some evidence that under their rule the country prospered In Chanda they left behind them royal tombs lakes and palaces and seven miles of battlemented stone wall But the Gond kings had no organization and no ability for war and were easily defeated by successive Mogul and Maratha invaders For a time the tribes made a precarious living by plunder and dacoity but they soon settled down to a peaceful existence in the glades of the forest always retiring deeper and deeper into the hills And there

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> Or be they love-sick or through too much heat
> Grown wild or lunatic their eyes or ears
> Thickened with misty film of dulling rheum
> These I can cure

But Panda's power does not derive from the same source as Fletcher's Clorin for he is a married man

Panda Baba is naturally an authority on agriculture though he does not really care to rend the bosom of Mother Earth his patroness with the iron plough At the Phag Festival he busies himself in rousing the spirits

of the ploughshares. He has them all brought out and made red hot in the bonfires lit for the feast, believing that this will thoroughly wake up the ploughs and make them keener on their work. One day, when we were very doubtful about the rains, he took me out into the forest to find a partridge's nest. When at last we discovered it, he was delighted to see that the four eggs were neatly arranged round the nest. 'Now the rain will fall regularly in each of the four months' he said. And so, of course, it did. And he told me a strange wild story how once, when the rains had failed, he made three women go to his field and there strip themselves naked. Two of them picked up the plough and the third drove them with an ox goad across the dry furrows. 'It was very dark' he explained to me apologetically. 'I could see nothing. And within a week we had all the rain we needed.'

Panda Baba's knowledge of the outer world is very strange. He is not quite so ignorant as an old Baiga I once met who thought that Mahatma Gandhi was something to eat. Yet even for him the thunder is the roar of Lakshman's arrow rushing across the sky in pursuit of the lightning bride he will never win; the rainbow grows up out of an ant-hill—I have seen it he declares; the mountains of the moon are the spots on the hide of the black buck who lives there; stars are living creatures—you know when they die because you see them fall. He knows the names of Bombay and Calcutta—Delhi is simply a synonym for something utterly remote. He has no idea of a British Raj, for all the officials in our district are Indian, and he has never heard of the Viceroy. The life of cities is wicked and corrupt: there carts go without bullocks and puff

out clouds of smoke Whores walk openly in the streets. On Sundays all the sahibs take their women to the churches and there catching them in their arms they dance

So Panda Baba lives in his little tumbledown mud hut so full of magic, among the forest-covered hills of the Maikal Range where long ago the rishis Kapila Muni Agastya Brighu wandered in search of the Eternal Truth

II

One day there came to our dispensary a ragged limping figure one hand hanging useless by his side the other wrapped in a dirty bit of rag It was Tutta an epileptic Gond youth of about twenty five A little while before he had fallen into a fire in one of his fits and burnt his one useful hand terribly Now gangrene had set in and the result was such that the neighbours had driven him out of the village We sent him at once to hospital a hundred miles distant fearing for his life or at least that his arm would have to be amputated

But Tutta had the good fortune to fall into the hands of a first-class Government doctor who fought for Tutta s life and even for his arm At last, with the loss of only one finger Tutta was discharged still in need of constant attention but safe

The first stage of his journey was from Bilaspur to Pendra Road and he was given his ticket and sent to the station As he reached the platform he saw the train steaming out of it. So he ran after it along the line He ran for several miles until he came to another station There he lay down and slept till he was

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awakened by the noise of another train going by He jumped up and supposing it to be the same train ran after it again On he went till he came to a third station and there a kindly station master explained the situation to him gave him some food and when a train did arrive put him into it After that he had a long twenty five mile journey through the jungle to Karanjia But he arrived at last and declared that he was going to live with us for ever

In Tutta we have a very simple and ordinary Gond with the mental outlook of a true-to nature poem by Wordsworth Panda Baba would be more at home in the pages of Blake Tutta has very few needs—he is chiefly I think interested in food he has abandoned at least one wife because she was a bad cook For a long time he would not look at any woman for fear of the Evil Eye It used to be an inspiring sight in this woman-dominated world to see Tutta in the presence of a girl whom he suspected of being a witch his back resolutely turned puffing away furiously at a cheap biri an anxious and wary look in his eye Once he told me when I was going through the forest at dusk I met a man without a head What had happened was that my sister in law s child was born dead and I told her again and again to put it in a pot and bury it in the dung hill But she refused and so a witch who was an enemy of mine was able to bring the ghost of the child back to earth and put it into the headless body of a man That man chased me through the forest all the way from Senguda to Bijori

What ancient tragedy could have excited this animosity to the female sex I have not yet discovered for Tutta has not the appearance of one who would be

lightly deceived by woman, still less the appearance of one whom woman, unless short-sighted and extraordinarily susceptible, would go out of her way to deceive. But there it is. Tutta is a good singer, and he loves to chant with a malicious relish the Saila song:

You earn two annas which you spend on yourself,
And you live for coquetry.
You put on a red sari and you think you can deceive me.
You make a mighty row with your little toe-rings,
And when you go to the well you walk quickly to make your anklets ring.
For an anna you buy bangles and a spangle for your forehead.
With oil you smooth your hair from back to front.
You put on your necklace and run to your mirror to gaze at yourself.
You take your friends to the bazaar and there you go round and round giggling for hours on end.

But later Tutta abandoned this highly correct, indeed almost monastic attitude. He came to take the common Gond view expressed again and again in their songs—'You may eat, you may drink, but life without a girl is wasted.' He determined to take a wife, but this proved to be less easy than it seemed at first, and the Diary records many adventures in this wife-hunt. Now that we have at last succeeded, Tutta is blissfully happy. He needs very little—a marigold tucked behind his ear, a packet of cheap cigarettes, a blanket, a little to drink down in the village at a festival, and his Rani beside him in their little hut, and he is perfectly content.

But in spite of this Tutta maintains his dread of witches who—

Make ewes cast their lambs, swine eat their farrow,
The housewives can not work, nor the milk churn!
W[illegible] the children's wrists, and suck their breath in sleep,
Get vials of their blood!

GOND WITCHCRAFT

The Gonds have always been famous for witchcraft Sleeman in his *Rambles and Recollections of an Indian Official* written in 1844 has several stories about Gond witches There was one in Seoni who revenged herself on a trooper who took some milk from her without paying for it Within an hour the trooper was down on his back screaming from the agony of internal pains The old woman was brought to him and commanded to cure him and after much protestation started her conjurations with such success that the man speedily recovered

A *chaprassi* was sent from Jubbulpore to Mandla with a message On the way he took a cock from an old Gond woman without paying for it and being hungry after his journey ate the whole of it in a curry

He heard the woman mutter something but being a raw unsuspecting youth he thought nothing of this ate his cock and went to sleep He had not been asleep three hours before he was seized with internal pains and the old cock was actually heard crowing in his belly He made the best of his way back to Jubbulpore several stages and all the most skilful men were employed to charm away the effects of the old woman's spell but in vain He died and the cock never ceased crowing at intervals up to the hour of his death

If all the cocks that were even today taken from the Gonds without payment were to crow in the bellies of those that ate them the Central Provinces would sound like a farmyard

What does a Gond like Tutta think of life and death? It is hard to say for he like many of the yokel Gonds is largely inarticulate It takes a Panda Baba (though it is not actually his definition) to describe heaven as 'miles and miles of forest without any forest-guards

or Hell as miles and miles of forest without any *mahua* trees —*mahua* trees being those from whose fruit liquor is distilled Hell in fact, is dry For Tutta death is simply to go to Bura Deo the Great God of the Gonds whose dwelling upon earth is the sacred *saj* tree But Tutta does not want to be buried underneath a *saj* but rather beneath that same *mahua* tree so that even in death he may suck some pleasure from its roots. Whether he will be punished or rewarded in that after life whether he will return (as surely he deserves to do) in some happier form to this strange planet what is the meaning of this life of sadness and frustration on all this he is inarticulate But he once said to me Life is friendship to live is to have friends. Why should we quarrel? We must show mercy to every one. The profoundest philosophy has gone no further

While Panda Baba represents the cultured and reflective Gond Tutta is a symbol of Gond poverty It is hard for us to imagine the extent of this poverty I remember that once there was a fire in our village A house which gave shelter to a father mother and four children was burnt to the ground and everything that the family possessed—stores vessels implements clothes—was lost. I found them weeping among the ashes How much would it cost you I asked them to rebuild your house and replace all your possessions? After some hesitation they rather shyly replied About four rupees. The price of say a new Aldous Huxley

A little while ago a Maria Gond saved the life of a Forest Officer in South Chanda from the jaws of a man eating tiger and was awarded the Albert Medal But when the time came for the Governor to present the

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is, there is such noise and excitement that all the neighbours run to the rescue.

The Gond legends are full of children The first boy and the first girl were named Addi rawn pariol and Sukma-devi velar, though they must have called each other by something a little more compendious. They were hatched out of eggs in the midst of the ocean and later, when they came to dry land, they built a wonderful house with cross bars of jay's feathers and rafters of a peacock's tail, and they lived there eating yams and fruits of the forest. Sukma-devi velar herself had a little daughter who had a golden rice-pounder and a golden basket to play with, and she was dressed in a wrap of gold. Then there is Singbaba, the little son of Sandsumjee, who was thrown out into the jungle in the path of the tigers. But a kind tigress took him and fed him with her milk. One day Sing baba said, 'I am naked I want clothes' So the tigress went and sat by the market road till muslin- and cloth makers came along She made them drop their bundles, which she took up and brought to Singbaba, who clothed himself and kissed her feet.

Another day, Singbaba wanted a bow and arrows, and the tigress got them for him, and Singbaba shot birds with it for his little tiger brothers. In the end Singbaba returned home: a Brahmin who refused to rise in his presence was promptly eaten by one of his brothers, the six wicked wives who had had him thrown out into the forest were given to the tigress, and Sing baba lived happily ever after.

Ral Linga was another wonderful child. He too was miraculously saved from death, this time by his beautiful smile. For when Queen Talko, his mother,

tried to kill him and sent two girls to bury him alive beneath a banyan tree he smiled at them and they had no heart to do their wicked deed Rai Linga also loved to play with his bow and arrow and used to wander far in the forest shooting doves and green parrots In the Mandla version of the story he was born a perfect child from a flower a diamond in his navel and sandal on his forehead He fell out of the flower into a heap of *turmeric* and he used to play there The boy Lal a Baiga hero of the woods of Bilaspur was likewise expert with the bow and arrow as well as with the catapult but his favourite toy was a magic wooden horse He used to take it to the river and dip its mouth into the water to make it drink and it would run faster than any living horse could do This was the horse that brought him back from exile to his mother and restored them both to happiness and wealth

But today the Gond children are no longer born with diamonds in their navels and far from having wrappings of gold they often have not even a cotton rag to tie round their shoulders From the day the Gond child comes into the world he must struggle desperately for existence Perhaps an owl has watched his coming and has sat with mournful hoot on the roof of the house The parents in their ignorance run out and try to drive the bird away by throwing sticks at it But the owl picks up one of these sticks and carries it to a stream He wets it and puts it in the sun Then as the stick slowly dries so does the child's thin body dry up and waste away. At least so Panda Baba tells me But whatev[illegible], all too many of these little bodies [illegible]ie The parents may do

everything they can They may put the child with the pigs so that he may grow fat as they are, with the utmost care they may bury the navel cord deep in a pile of dung so that he may be strong they may crack the horn of a deer and hang a fragment of it round his neck, so that the boy will run fast as the deer, but they cannot do the one thing necessary—they cannot give him proper food and enough of it.

When the child falls ill the parents go first to a gunia or medicine man like Panda Baba to discover whose enchantments have caused the sickness If this fails they turn to natural remedies weird enough but sometimes effective In our village there was a child with prolapsus of the intestine The mother caught a river crab roasted it whole and gave it to the child to eat and the child recovered. Another day, a boy was badly mauled by a bear while out guarding the cattle The family caught a wild pig, killed it bathed the wound in the hot blood and made a poultice of the skin The treatment was effective A cure for rheumatism is to find a boy who has been born feet first and to touch the painful part with the boy's left foot

When a child is born one of the most important things is to find out what ancestor has been reborn in him For it is usually some member of the family who thus returns to join his clan The disembodied ghost wanders through the Borderland seeking a place of warmth and love Where else will he find it but by his own fireside? Panda Baba is called in and he examines the child for any distinctive marks by which the ancestor might be recognized If the child refuses his mother's milk, he must have been a person of importance then to be so independent now

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The next important thing is to name the child. It is best to give him some name that will give the *bhuts*, or ghosts, a false impression of his value. Many of our children bear the names of lower castes—like Bhangi (for what evil spirit would bother to molest a mere sweeper?) or Pankin. (The Gonds say of the Pankas that if a Panka can find a pumpkin you will get no more work out of him that week.) Others are called Ghurha, a pile of cowdung, Bisahu, something bought in the market, and Jiggery or Nanas, 'the little 'un'. Other curious names are Matches, Biri Katta (or Packet of Cigarettes), given because the father bought a packet as the child was born; and D.F.O.—after the District Forest Officer.

The child grows older and slowly begins to explore the wonderland that lies about him. For the forest-child has this one great joy, that the whole world of nature is his: he is the child of the open air, of mountains and streams, of the lonely forest-path, and of the wild rushing winds. At first he goes to the forest strapped to his mother's back as she goes to cut wood, but later he himself takes the cattle out to pasture in some glade or clearing in those thick woods—

> Whose bottom never kissed the sun

Or he sets out, with a few friends, to dig for roots or gather 'nuts more brown than the squirrel's teeth that crack them', or to bring piled baskets full of jungle fruit and berries.

> Here be berries for a queen,
> Some be red, some be green,
> These are of that luscious meat
> The great god Pan himself doth eat.

Very early he learns the dangers of his life one of the neighbours is killed by a tiger and all the village goes to the spot and the child watches Panda Baba drive a nail into a tree to close the tiger's jaws Or even as once happened here a panther may come right into the house and the child awake to a nightmare of sharp claws and eyes gleaming in the dark Then there are snakes everywhere—sometimes a great python gliding lazily along the road or the little deadly krait hidden among the pots—and black scorpions large as a man s hand and hairy

I do not think that Gond children have any very strong Intimations of Immortality as they wander and play in the forest but they love beautiful things—flowers and bright colours the sunlight on the streams the broad sweet-smelling fields of oil seed the glorious orange blossoms of the *palas* tree the fragrant flower of the *kachnar* the evergreen *sāl* forest—

> Where l ttle footpaths sweet to see
> Go seeking sweeter footpaths st ll

Yet for them as for their elders all nature is alive with spirits—Nang banshee living in the great trees Bhareshwar Deo lord of the wild beasts whose dwelling is the running water and under stones and bushes the wicked Machan who lurks by the highways and robs the passers-by the angry burning ghost in the unhappy hollow of the *semur* tree Makramal Kshattri the mon s rous spider whom you may meet at dusk straddling across the road and Saraglil whose mouth is ever open whose lower lip rests on the ground while the upper touches the sky There are countless stories of these far stretcl ing woods where—

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> *Here be berries for a queen*
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bring wood from the jungle and the little girls cook them a dinner At the end of the rains the girls make holes in a black earthen pot and put a lamp inside it. Sometimes they add the mud image of a dove Then they go round singing and dancing to collect food in the same way as the boys had done at the other festival In August you may see many children going about on stilts—it is the festival of Giri mata—with the idea of making the crops grow as high as they are.

The children love playing at riddles I remember sitting by the fire one evening with a group of boys and there was no stopping them Some of them knew eighty to a hundred riddles and they were very scornful at my slowness in guessing them 'Without feet it climbs without a tongue it eats if it drinks water it dies. What on earth is that? Fire of course very easy when you know the answer It has a neck but no head it has arms but no hands' That is a shirt 'When I was a virgin they were always beating me But now I am married no one dares even to pat my head That is an earthen pot which before it is set is beaten and pounded but after it has hardened must be kept carefully both for fear that it will be broken and also because if someone of another caste touches it it has to be thrown away This is a very hard one A legless thief came and stole an udderless buffalo A headless sneak went off to tell the tale That is a snake which eats a frog while a crab sees it and runs away Every aspect of village life is reflected in the riddles.

And then at last the child must grow up They have a song rather a sad one about that.

> The nimble footed fairies dance their rounds
> By the pale moonshine dipping oftentimes
> Their stolen children so to make them free
> From dying flesh and dull mortality

But by the time he is five the forest-child must go to work In the blacksmith's shop guarded by Lohar Sur Demon of the iron kilns Jiggery a tiny girl with a huge stomach puffed out with roundworm works the bellows Ranger a fat and smiling baby drives out the cattle with a flow of *gali* of which a costermonger *might well be proud* little Hazari *not more than ten* sleeps alone all night in the wheat fields to drive away wild pig *and other* thieves The little girls sift the rice and plaster cowdung and nurse the babies But for all that they manage to fit in a good deal of play

The Gond child has all sorts of games He loves to imitate the old people his grandmother weeping at a death his father drunk at a *marriage*—

> Filling from time to time his humorous stage
> With all the Persons down to palsied Age
> That Life brings with her in her equipage

You may see a group of little boys solemnly performing the Saila dance or offering sacrifice *before a stick* with a feather tied to it while one of them falls into ecstatic convulsions *to the delight of the onlookers* I once found a group of children playing cards with leaves of different sizes playing too with the utmost earnestness and importance *dashing down* a winning leaf with the very air of a successful gambler At Dassera *time* the boys cover their bodies with ash like *sadhus* improvise begging bowls and go *about* to collect what food they can When they have enough they

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O when I was a child I played in mother's lap
But now I am grown I must share another's life
Tell me, O tell me the joys that lie beyond
When I was a little girl I played with other children
But now I must share the life of a man
Yet remember, my lord that I am still a child
If your child cannot content you,
You must be patient with her

IV

Twenty four years ago in a village set high among the forests that cover these sacred Maikal Hills there was born a *little girl* of the romantic stock of the Pardhans, the minstrels and fortune tellers of the Gonds At her birth, her father went to the river and made a long three days' hunting until at last he caught and killed—a kingfisher, the kingfisher that hovers above the dancing waters of a stream its wings dancing in the air the kingfisher that is full of vitality and beauty, gay-coloured and always dancing in the dancing air He brought it home and gave his little daughter a tiny fragment of the flesh to eat

She grew up and as her father had desired the spirit of the kingfisher lived in her and she became a dancer fit—

> To awake
> The nimble horn pipe and the timburine
> And mix our songs and dances in the wood

We will call her Phulmat Long ago Forsyth described Gond women thus

Great robust creatures *finer animals by far than the men* In the interior bevies of Gond women may be seen who are more like monkeys than human beings The features of all are strongly marked and coarse The

girls occasionally possess such comeliness as attaches to general plumpness and a good humoured expression of face but when their short youth is over all pass at once into a hideous age

Well well well. Now let me show you Phulmat coming from the river on her head a polished brass vessel that shines with all the glory of the morning and in her bearing the grace and dignity of a princess Her face oval and light in colour her smooth dark hair breaking into curls about her temples round her throat bright vari-coloured beads and coloured ribbons tying back her hair she will give you a sensation of light and life but above all of colour a girl of furious gold

Then see her dance. It is as the Gonds say like the wind moving in the branches of a great tree it is the kingfisher flying above sparkling waters In her the forest has come to fruit and flower And not only Phulmat is beautiful but there are hundreds of Gond girls who have more in them of Tess than of Audrey If the Gonds were once kings their women are still princesses. And they still rule There is none of this subjugation of woman in a Gond village The wife is the real ruler of the house she is independent free and therefore happy Phulmat indeed is a strong feminist She tells with great pleasure the story of the Stria Raj or Regiment of Women which was once established in a neighbouring district. Crowds of women gathered together and declared that they were soldiers and would rule. They marched from place to place sending a goat's head before them in token of their coming With hair unbound and flying in the breeze spears and axes in their hands, they reduced all

Gawadi and Rai Linga went to get it from him On the way he made the first *kingri*, with three gourds and a bamboo stick and two hairs plucked from his head and when he reached the giant's field he began to play As he played the trees and hills were silent, and the giant arose longing to hear more 'Whence has a creature come here today to sing like the maina bird? And then as the rhythm of the music entered his very being that wicked old giant began to dance

> He came to the road and near to the fire in the midst of his field
> Sometimes sitting and sometimes standing jumping and rolling he began to dance
> The music sounded as the day dawned His old woman came to see
> She heard from the field a melodious music playing
> When she arrived near the edge of the field she heard music in her ears
> That old woman called her husband to her
> With stretched hands and lifted feet and with his neck bent down he danced
> The old woman looked at her husband and said My old man my husband
> Surely that music is very melodious I will dance said the old woman
> Having made the fold of her dress loose she quickly began to dance near the hedge.

It is very interesting to find that the Gonds have a version of the *Ramayana* all their own in which Lakshman is the hero and the whole story is based on the power of music. For Lakshman also has a wonderful *kingri* a *nimmat kingri* a fiddle that played the songs of love Once when he stopped playing for a time and hung his *kingri* up on the wall it dropped great tears of misery So beautiful was the music that

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the echo of it went up to heaven and Indrakamini the fairy goddess heard it and left her celestial court to wander on earth in search of the music maker But Lakshman was purity itself his fiddle was the *kingri* of truth and with all her wiles she could not tempt him But Rama came to suspect his relations with Sita and had him put in an iron grain bin to be burnt to death But Lakshman sat there playing gaily on his fiddle and when nine days were passed came out unscathed

One day a party of Bhimas came to the Ashram the men strumming gaily on the *tuma* while the women danced before them Like the Pardhans the Bhimas are an offshoot of the Gond tribe devoted to music and the dance Long ago Sita had a quarrel with Ramachandra and he was in despair not knowing how to reconcile her But the great giant Bhimsen took some of the rubbings of his body and made a little man out of them Then he took a gourd an Ahir's bamboo some wax and a cord made from the sinew of a black buck and made the first *tuma* Bhimsen gave it to his little man who danced and sang so beautifully that Sita forgot her temper and thereafter the *tuma* was known as the *mohan baja* the guitar of comfort and *the little man became the first Bhima Ever since his* tribe have wandered from village to village singing and dancing *Have you any fields? I asked them This* is our field and bullocks they replied pointing to the *tuma* the instrument that brought them their living

The Bhimas actually worship music Their hero Bhimsen lives in the *tuma* and dances to the tunes it makes The Bhimas keep two festivals in honour of music When the new rice is ready they bring some

of it and place it on a *saj* leaf in front of their *tuma* They make a little fire, and scatter the rice on the fire and on their instrument, saying 'O Bhimsen, receive this offering For the music is thine, thou first mad'st it.' At the Festival of Dassera they make a goat out of a pumpkin and four twigs for legs. They place it before the *tuma*, with flowers and little lumps of cowdung and at last sacrifice the model goat by cutting it in half, and saying as before, 'O Bhimsen, receive this offering For the music is thine; thou first mad'st it'

Has the primitive any message for the modern world, or should we try to bring him as soon as possible, into the main streams of civilization? There are many elements in the Gond ethos which should be conserved —their simplicity and freedom, their love of children, the position of their women, their independence of spirit (no silly ducking observants these!) their free dom from many of the usual oriental inhibitions. I think that the primitive has a real message for our sophisticated modern world which is once again threatened with disintegration as a result of its passion for possessions and its lack of love Panda Baba and Phulmat and their neighbours have had to work out a philosophy of life than can face poverty and disease, frustration and disaster with unwearied courage

This mud hut philosophy bids us not to demand too much from life not to set too much store on things, not even to expect too much from the immortal gods, but to love most where love will be returned, in the charmed family circle, in the friends who will stand by you till death. A gay freedom of spirit is the most precious of possessions, and simplicity of heart the greatest treasure man or woman knows.

1932

January 28 Set out with Shamrao in buffalo-cart for unknown village of Karanjia thirty three miles distant Pass small temple by roadside where we are informed a holy man was recently devoured by a tiger, so thoroughly that when after discreet interval sorrowing disciples gathered for his obsequies all that could be discovered was unfortunate man s right leg and a set of false teeth. Shamrao raises interesting problem as to how far false teeth can be preserved as genuine relics. A little farther along the road find Gond shrine with two ferocious looking mud images of tigers Here says our cartman in between the two tigers it is always perfectly safe to sleep But as there is not room for us all in this haven we halt our buffalo-cart and after rather curious meal prepared mostly in utter darkness climb into cart which is full almost to brim with dried grass, and which while fitting Shamrao like a glove is far too restricted for my Brobdingnagian limbs However in the end Nature asserts itself and I sleep fitfully till dawn.

January 29 Still twenty seven miles of jungle and ghat before us but we make much better progress today covering seventeen miles, arriving after dark at small settlement Kabir Chabutra apparently on roof of world and very cold In evening meet panther

rupees a month Distant memories of rents charged by Oxford landladies convince me that this is cheap and close with offer at once though subsequently discover that the house itself could have been bought for less than its monthly rental

February 1 Return by same leisurely method of progression which again takes three days to civilization to fetch Property which consists at present of old black leather trunk (which has been several times to West Africa so will probably find this new adventure rather commonplace) containing about twenty books and odds and ends of clothing more food and some bedding Reflect sadly that this happy freedom from possessions is probably too Franciscan to last long in a tropical climate

February 5 Reach Wardha where property has been deposited but find most of old friends in jail on account of Satyagraha Campaign revived a month before Mrs Jamnalal Bajaj however still at liberty and gives us royal welcome lending us a pair of Jamnalalji's pyjamas —which are roomy enough for Shamrao and self to occupy together if we wished—and khadi mosquito-net which though utterly patriotic and highly mosquito-proof appears to admit no air whatever Children ask us to collect stamps for them cigarette cards being naturally banned in Gandhian circles which we promise to do though very doubtful whether letters will ever reach us again

February 6 Leave Wardha with regret, feeling like mariners about to be marooned on desert island without having first solved that most important of problems —If you could only take three books with you then which? Calcutta Mail held up for half an hour

whose gleaming eyes are, as the thrillers say, twin pools of evil; but after giving us a lingering look, it departs to find more readily accessible dinner.

January 30. About midday finally reach Karanjia, which turns out to be collection of twelve scattered hamlets in really beautiful valley. Feel very tired and have been mistaken enough to get two hours ahead of our supplies. Sit on cold bit of rock and think wistfully of beer and oysters. Villagers refuse to give any help, and not even large money will tempt them to provide us with so much as a pot of water. But at last police come to inspect us, and in magically short time all necessities are supplied.

January 31. Explore Karanjia, which has two brick buildings, the police station and the offices of the Forest Department, and a very much less imposing school, annual cost of which is more or less equal to that of one ordinary English soldier resident in India. There is also a bazaar, entire contents of which could be bought up for about £10, and a liquor shop, which in its dirt and stink unhappily bears no resemblance to a country pub in England. At some distance from this centre of commerce, culture and administration discover picturesque little hamlet with delightful name of Tikera Tola, on very edge of forest with great trees among the houses. Walk straight on to hill overlooking village and feel instinctively that this, in spite of fact that it is at present apparently used as public lavatory by the inhabitants, is the very spot for our Ashram.

In evening go to village and almost immediately find dignified but impoverished Mussalman named Hyder Ali who offers to rent us small hut, at present occupied by his goats, and to put it into order for sum of three

he further claims to be member of C. of E (but is not aware that it is Ash Wednesday) and as driving staff consists of three burly fellows one to drive and two to push and there are three of us happily all emaciated making seven—or perhaps six and a half—in all have to hire supplementary bullock-cart to carry baggage It is now 11 30 when driver discovers that he has for gotten his petrol and his colleagues go off for their dinner Meantime stranded for an hour and a half in apostolic discomfort heat and publicity only slightly assuaged by reflexion that policeman is enjoying ex perience even less than ourselves. Finally start at a little after one and after indescribable journey over mountains during which car has to be pushed carried and cajoled across numerous gullies swamps and rivers at sunset reach village of Bondar still two miles from destination where road peters out altogether Drivers dump our baggage by side of road and drive off rapidly with stout policeman who is eating sardines off a bit of newspaper Ask passing rustics to help us carry things to Karanjia but after gazing at us in shocked amazement they take to their heels and run away One of them bursts into tears. Finally decide to carry what we can and leave the rest. But here there is another hitch for cook goes on strike saying that to carry things not his work So we leave him there sit ting on old black trunk and go on to Tikera Tola which we reach after nightfall to find hut empty of goats but otherwise unimproved. Persuade two neigh bours to go out to rescue cook and remaining baggage though privately of opinion that we would all be much more comfortable in open jungle while we remove from hut grosser forms of dirt and make a bed from

somewhere near Bilaspur while police board train and prosecute lengthy and exceedingly impertinent examination of self and belongings suspicion having been aroused so I am informed by weedy and astigmatic investigator by my curious appearance and the fact that I am travelling third-class Asks me if I have any seditious literature with me and I reply yes an answer which causes great excitement till I produce Bible and tell policeman that this is most disturbing book in the world and that it will revolutionize his life if he will read it carefully Police take their departure with curious celerity being uncertain as to what may be coming next

February 8 Return to inhospitable little town Pendra Road and find cook—apparently of lowest possible caste but calls himself Brahmin Christian—and buy necessary supplies Much encouraged by local padre who speaks enthusiastically of the missionaries who died at Karanjia within three months of their arrival and by Mussulman merchant who observes that it will be very difficult to get any *meat* there

February 10—Ash Wednesday Very suitable opening of Lenten campaign of mortification Having hired small tumbledown Ford to take us and belongings to Karanjia driver has promised to be ready at seven in the morning so that we may have a chance of reaching destination before dark At ten sharp loud clattering and roaring noises announce arrival of car, front seat completely occupied by enormous Sub-Inspector of Police with gun who declares his intention of accompanying us for our protection as he also is a Christian Grave doubts of this being his true motive, but can hardly forcibly eject him specially as

he further claims to be member of C. of E. (but is not aware that it is Ash Wednesday) and as driving staff consists of three burly fellows one to drive and two to push and there are three of us happily all emaciated making seven—or perhaps six and a half—in all have to hire supplementary bullock-cart to carry baggage It is now 11.30 when driver discovers that he has forgotten his petrol and his colleagues go off for their dinner Meantime stranded for an hour and a half in apostolic discomfort heat and publicity only slightly assuaged by reflexion that policeman is enjoying experience even less than ourselves Finally start at a little after one and after indescribable journey over mountains during which car has to be pushed carried and cajoled across numerous gullies swamps and rivers at sunset reach village of Bondar still two miles from destination where road peters out altogether Drivers dump our baggage by side of road and drive off rapidly with stout policeman who is eating sardines off a bit of newspaper Ask passing rustics to help us carry things to Karanjia but after gazing at us in shocked amazement they take to their heels and run away One of them bursts into tears. Finally decide to carry what we can and leave the rest. But here there is another hitch for cook goes on strike saying that to carry things not his work. So we leave him there sitting on old black trunk and go on to Tikera Tola which we reach after nightfall to find hut empty of goats but otherwise unimproved. Persuade two neighbours to go out to rescue cook and remaining baggage though privately of opinion that we would all be much more comfortable in open jungle while we remove from hut grosser forms of dirt and make a bed from

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heaps of warm dry grass Cook turns up at last but says he is too tired to prepare supper besides no wood or water so we all go to sleep as we are

February 11 No one willing to sell us milk eggs or vegetable or come anywhere near us but at last an old Madge Mumblecrust already out of caste on account of an irregular maidenhood now evidently long over declares herself willing to help with our water supply Hyder Ali our landlord calls to explain that he has been much occupied with the affairs of his senior wife who having pushed her sister in law down a well has been compelled to hide in distant village However he immediately begins renovations and repairs which consist of dabbing holes in wall with wet mud and washing floor with solution of cowdung This gives us great relief for even one night had brought us many visitors lately resident on the backs of the goats so that I find myself using remarkable words of Lafcadio Hearn— I an individual an individual soul? Nay I am a population a population unthinkable

February 12 Visit grave of German missionaries under the shade of a great tree looking out across fields Five of them came here in 1842 an apothecary a padre a mason a carpenter but within a few months four were dead and the fifth out of his mind Villagers say that the Earth Mother smote them because they abused her customs but they do not add openly (though I suspect they think it) that she will smite us also

February 13 Night broken by loud cries from neighbour s field and at first feel inspired to go to the rescue but sanity prevails

February 14 Early in morning agitated Gond dowager brings news that her husband who enjoys an

astonishing nickname Leybugga or 'The Fellow who Carries Them Off', was caught last night by one Bukkoo in a field with Mrs B and there belaboured to extremity Go in haste to house and find unfortunate L., handsome man with face of a genial leopard, but surely a trifle old for this sort of thing, covered with bruises and bleedings which Shamrao bandages with a quiet efficiency of which I had not thought him capable

February 15 Our contact with L's household produces immediate change of atmosphere and by midday half the village seems to be sitting in front of the house which is now more or less fit for habitation, cow shed being transformed into a chapel and the wood shed into a kitchen while we live mostly on small verandah between the two and make it fairly comfortable in spite of the fact that it is normally full of acrid smoke from kitchen and always open to inspection by the public.

February 17 Suffer acutely from old and typically monastic complex of claustrophobia due to being watched all day by villagers. L. still recumbent. Mrs B who to our surprise has only one eye and that one asquint also exhibits distinct signs of having been disciplined.

February 22 L. still in bed but recovering rapidly under ministrations of Shamrao who already has considerable fame as a doctor Old gentleman, nearly falling to pieces with tertiary syphilis comes for treatment and takes up his residence in chapel. But since I have hitherto supposed that this disease is only to be mentioned if at all in low and averted voice, have no medicine for it in stock, and feel that dose of Enos will probably be inadequate.

turn green and hastily descend, all differences forgotten in this change of colours

March 1 Small boy, with enormous head and legs like two exiguous twigs brought by mother to our house Shamrao prescribes regular doses of Balamrit, admirable though sweet and sticky tonic, good food and daily massage So from now on Ganesh takes his meals with us very *solemnly at first but later* with more abandon his greatest pleasure being to beat us with all his might with tiny fists.

March 2 Early in the morning cook as result of indiscreet inquiry about over rapid disappearance of a tin of ghee gives notice and packs his baggage In afternoon two magnificently uniformed Indian police officers arrive with search warrant. Suggest that we have tea first Cook who has not yet departed is so impressed with distinguished appearance of visitors that he decides to remain with us after all After tea and a very uplifting conversation about Nature of the Absolute officers produce their warrant but unfortunately can find among our scanty possessions nothing to prove us guilty of death or bonds since only a week previously *in* a fit of discretion, I had destroyed a precious collection of revolutionary pamphlets which I had hoped one day to present to the Bodleian The police depart foiled and baffled but still talking about the Absolute which almost immediately vindicates us by sending violent thunderstorm out of a blue sky and rain pours through our roof Cannot however, decide whether definite emotion of pleasure that wet as we no doubt are policemen must be getting even wetter, is in best tradition of Christian Ethics or not After all high authority for believing that bliss of saved in

February 23 Victorian attitude to venereal disease will clearly have to be abandoned 'O we've all got that' says L. cheerfully on hearing of new patient See in some statistical record that there is only one registered doctor to every 35 714 persons in this Province. We are so touched by this specially by that extra 14 which must surely be the last straw to the overworked doctor that we decide to open a dispensary without delay

February 25 Little boy with terribly burnt arm is brought to us and is doctored with natural remedies and shirt torn up for bandages Order in stock of medicines mostly fool proof pills and ointments from invaluable institution known as the All India Missions Tablet Industry which in spite of disconcerting habit of packing in with their pills little tracts bidding one prepare to meet one's God provide excellent medicines.

February 26 Go to great festival at Amarkantak sacred source of River Narbada which according to ancient Puranic prophecy is one day to be held even more holy than the Ganges Immense concourse of greasy citizens while no doubt picturesque prevents any real enjoyment of sight of rows of *sadhus* sitting completely naked Am struck afresh by truth of Samuel Butler's remark that there is only one thing vainer than the vanity of human wishes and that is the vanity of having no wishes Meet Sub Inspector of Police who has come from Karanjia ostensibly for spiritual purification but actually I suspect to look out for opium smugglers He suggests political rapprochement and conducts me to wooden merry-go-round which is whirled about by half a dozen lusty fellows After some minutes of this curious form of pleasure we both

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and to the right a wide expanse of hills and fields After heated argument, Shamrao maintaining that it will foster animistic superstitions we have walls decorated in Gond fashion with mud animals, tigers, elephants camels and a peacock, Stations of the Cross are arranged round the courtyard, and everything is made white and clean by a wash of white mud from the hills. As we pay unprecedentedly high daily wage of four annas for men and three for women, cost of the Ashram comes to about a hundred rupees of which the chapel s share is thirty or less than two pounds ten

March 12 Ganesh beginning to look fat and happy, but not yet able to walk upright Begin to be haunted by ancient Gond, of great prestige and dignity, named Ganpat who forty years ago, was headman of the village. One day to celebrate visit of high official on tour, got very drunk and in this condition was inspired to go to the camp and there lie down and vomit excessively on high official s bed Somewhat relieved by this unusual exercise he started home but fell into bush on the way and lay there till he was extracted by h o who being also a man of the world forgave him on condition of his swearing on sacred cowdung and twig of the holy saj that he would never again touch wine or tobacco till he died. Ganpat though feeling that possibly a good straight period of imprisonment would be preferable made the vow and even kept it probably owing his long life to the fact. Unfortunately, his deeply religious nature compels him to believe that we have been sent into the district for the sole purpose of giving him a blanket.

April 4 Excursion to picturesque village named Bhimkundi on banks of Narbada River, where there

heaven is greatly increased when they see the sorrows of the damned in hell

March 3 Prestige among villagers rises enormously as a result of yesterday's visitation it being generally assumed that we must be persons of great importance if police officers come in full uniform to pay us their respects

March 7 Two large parcels of medicines are delivered. One from a friend in Bombay contains castor oil, quinine, aspirin, sulphur balances bandages, several rolls of very old lint, some cotton wool and a bottle of small white pills mysteriously labelled 'For All Diseases The other parcel gives us a good supply of sodium salicylate potassium iodide ichthyol ointment, etc., and with this stock we open the dispensary, which is immediately crowded with anaemic looking husbands demanding remedies for impotence, for which we unhappily have no cure

March 10 Bank balance now sufficiently established for us to start building the Ashram on brow of hill overlooking village Send men for bamboos for which we get an order at eight annas a hundred from the Forest Department, and for long poles and pillars of wood which we get for two or three annas apiece Women cut grass for thatch and prepare sticky mixture of mud and straw to spread on walls After a week's feverish activity extraordinary building emerges In centre is little chapel, and round it is a mud plastered bamboo wall making a spacious court while in front is a house of five rooms, but without doors or outside walls, so that we sit in the rooms as if we were on the deck of a ship, and look out over the edge of the hill —immediately in front is a beautiful wooded valley,

he cannot move, employ Quaker Oats tin in place of useful but seldom discussed, piece of bedroom ware.

April 13. Somewhat perturbed to find party of Gonds have penetrated to Chapel, and are prostrating themselves before Shamrao's Quaker Oats tin under the impression that it is the Christian God.

April 14 Watch Gond ceremony of divorce, so wonderfully simple a performance that I am surprised it has not yet been adopted at Hollywood. The two parties appear before elders of the village, and break an earthen pot (which presumably symbolizes domestic happiness) and then snap a piece of straw in half, and all is over

April 15 In evening, parents bring little boy with head and arm badly torn by panther Panther had crept into house and dragged child out into jungle, but mother, hearing screams, ran after him and saved him

April 16 While sitting on edge of our hill for evening prayers, two bears come by As we are engaged in holy exercises try not to listen, but as Mrs Cluppins once said the voices was very loud and forced themselves upon the ear Try as I might, in middle of *Magnificat*, a verse takes shape in my mind.

> When bears with harsh and ugly cries
> At Evensong your prayers surprise,
> How hard to mortify the eyes.

April 17 Trying hard to compose Life of St Francis that will be intelligible to Indian readers. Remember lending copy of Father Cuthbert to M.A. of Bombay University, who began at title-page and worked onward with great application After he had read Preface to Thirteenth Edition, Preface to Eighth Edition, Preface

is a large circular hole in rock where it is said the divine hero Bhimsen once put down his foot but for my part do not believe a word of it Exceedingly hot, so bathe in secluded part of river in rather inadequate costume So engrossed in trying to keep perfectly still while floating with the current that fail to notice most of the population gathered on bank and gazing at me with absorbed and enthusiastic eyes. Hurriedly shelter beneath rock and adjust my garments and then emerge feeling wet and foolish and make my way to cattle shed in which rather superior Brahmin has allowed us to rest In the evening very exciting ceremony takes place Several people become possessed with Spirit of Monkey God and climb tall poles adorned with peacock s feathers They also very bravely it seems to me scourge themselves with spiked chains and protruding their tongues stick sharp pointed iron rods through them Feel that this exercise would have been more appropriate to season of Lent now happily over but surely remarkable at any time

April 8 Another expedition this time to house of well-to-do Brahmin for wedding feast In middle of dinner Shamrao is invited to sing and mistakenly in my opinion chants famous song of Kabir about the emptiness of wealth and the transitoriness of all human pleasures an effort which is hardly greeted with the enthusiasm which the technique of the singing deserves

April 12 Shamrao falls violently ill of unknown complaint and at the same time torrents of rain fall upon us our roofs affording hardly any shelter Remove him to the chapel which is the only dry place in Ashram and spread his bed on floor in front of Our Lady As

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April 17 Trying hard to compose Life of St Francis that will be intelligible to Indian readers. Remember lending copy of Father Cuthbert to M.A. of Bombay University who began at title-page and worked onward with great application After he had read Preface to Thirteenth Edition, Preface to Eighth Edition, Preface

is a large circular hole in rock where, it is said the divine hero Bhimsen once put down his foot, but for my part do not believe a word of it Exceedingly hot, so bathe in secluded part of river in rather inadequate costume So engrossed in trying to keep perfectly still while floating with the current that fail to notice most of the population gathered on bank and gazing at me with absorbed and enthusiastic eyes Hurriedly shelter beneath rock and adjust my garments and then emerge feeling wet and foolish and make my way to cattle shed in which rather superior Brahmin has allowed us to rest In the evening very exciting ceremony takes place Several people become possessed with Spirit of Monkey God and climb tall poles adorned with pea cock s feathers They also very bravely it seems to me, scourge themselves with spiked chains and protruding their tongues stick sharp pointed iron rods through them Feel that this exercise would have been more appropriate to season of Lent now happily over, but surely remarkable at any time

April 8 Another expedition this time to house of well to-do Brahmin for wedding feast In middle of dinner Shamrao is invited to sing and mistakenly in my opinion chants famous song of Kabir about the emptiness of wealth and the transitoriness of all human pleasures an effort which is hardly greeted with the enthusiasm which the technique of the singing deserves

April 12 Shamrao falls violently ill of unknown complaint and at the same time torrents of rain fall upon us our roofs affording hardly any shelter Remove him to the chapel which is the only dry place in Ashram and spread his bed on floor in front of Our Lady As

A notable victory for the Prince of Peace

April 21 Gigantic storm bursts upon us hail driving almost horizontally into the rooms, and we experience all the benefits of irrigation. Portions of roof fly excitedly into the air, and one corner shows tendency to flap up and down like the wing of an agitated hen Hold on to this and keep it firmly under control while Shamrao props up one of the walls

April 22 Go through fields and find scene of utter desolation Crops of already half-starving Gonds almost entirely ruined by yesterday's storm and at same time receive information that fields of rich Brahmin recently visited were undamaged Ways of Providence surely very odd?

May 1 Elderly Agaria (blacksmith) badly mauled by bear in distant village brought to us in a litter For three days he had been delayed because no one would carry him because he was slightly lower caste. A Gond must not carry even a dying man if he comes of a wrong family Theological crisis occurs in Ashram on Agaria requesting that his litter should be slung from the roof so that he may be suspended between earth and heaven and thus be safe from the spirits who inhabit both. This Shamrao sternly refuses which annoys me, and I point out that according to our ideals respect is due to every form of religious conviction

May 6 Hear of good method of turning a new born child into a first-class orator Touch the tip of his tongue with a razor says old Ganpat, and when he grows up he will be as talkative as a barber

May 10 Visited by Bishop supported by two other missionaries of lesser rank. They keep their boots on when entering the Ashram and find some difficulty in

to First Edition Errata and Table of Contents he decided that he had had enough and gave the book back remarking that the life of the saint was not so inspiring as he had hoped Progress of writing greatly hampered by multitude of ants who climb bravely and persistently all over my body and refuse to go away

Cook goes at last to our great relief and village boy takes his place

April 18 Witch threatens new cook with lingering death if he does not leave our service while stomach warns me of similar fate for myself if he continues in it. Very great dilemma Ultimately inform village that I also am a *panda* or priest of great power and that they had better take care No more trouble from anyone or anything save my own indigestion and that apparently is beyond the reach of magic.

April 19 I am sent small pamphlet about missionary work in the Mandla District published by the Church Missionary Society entitled *In Tiger Jungles* and bearing on cover thrilling picture of some ferocious animal being pursued by Anglican clergyman with a gun We are greatly struck by progress of Christian spirit among the Gonds

That the teaching given to the young [says the writer] has not been without result was strikingly illustrated during the war The efforts of Government to gain recruits from the Gonds met with little or no response and an appeal was made to the Christian Gonds As a result twenty five per cent of the eligible men joined up and through them many non Christian Gonds To show its appreciation the Government inserted a special paragraph in the Gazette praising in glowing terms the Christian community and holding it up as a pattern of good citizenship and loyalty

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ham to ham in an effort to get comfortable on our rather uneven cow-dunged floor 'You, my Lord, were a chaplain in the war You lived among those whose profession was to kill others You gave them your moral support' (the Bishop nods with emphasis) 'and you did all you could to help your side to win I have simply been a sort of chaplain to an army whose hands are not blood stained but who are using the weapons of non violence and truth And I want my side to win Why if I am wrong were you right? Haven t Congressmen souls?' Bishop looks a little dubious at this audacious suggestion but can only say, 'Well, it takes a great deal to save the soul of a Congressman'

Finally visitors get up to go and as he leaves Bishop pronounces an impressive anathema 'You are a traitor to the cause of Christ You are a traitor to the King Emperor You are doing the work of the devil'

They drive off in a flurry of indignant dust and only then too late realize that in the excitement we have completely forgotten to offer the poor creatures tea.

Reflect that it s a topsy turvy world Unequal, as Mr Weller used to say when his rum wasn t mixed half and half However console myself by composing little poem

> Remember should you e er grow slack
> Repressing the sed tious black—
> The Cross is on the Union Jack

May 17 Little Ganesh at last walks a few yards, encouraged by mother who tells him to imagine that he is a cock chasing a hen Decide to pay a four months' visit to Europe.

squatting on the floor This may account for very very curious conversation which follows The Bishop opens unpromisingly by saying he cannot have anything to do with us because (*a*) we are followers of Gandhi the great enemy of Christ in modern India (*b*) we have associated with that recreant priest C F Andrews and (*c*) we are wearing khadi the symbol of brute force

At this point younger of the two missionaries small, pink and (I suspect) Fundamentalist who had arrived in India a month ago exclaims suddenly in very solemn voice I do not see any use my Lord in discussing the affairs of Christ with a renegade In fact he is more than a renegade he is a traitor he has betrayed his country and his Lord and has thrown in his lot with their enemies What profit is there in discussing the things of the Kingdom with such a man? This almost too good to be true is the sort of remark that compensates for the trials of a lifetime and I wink delightedly at Shamrao but unfortunately man of God intercepts this and turns even pinker than before

No priest of mine says the Bishop may have any political views I suggest some precedents such as St Thomas Aquinas and Archbishop Temple I dont care about the Archbishop you might as well quote the Dean of Canterbury *In my diocese there will be* nothing of the kind But if a Congressman wished to become a Christian clergyman? Then he must forswear the Congress But your clergy have the *Union Jack in their churches Isnt that politics?* Ah but the Union Jack is the standard of the Cross

'A bloody Cross exclaims Shamrao unable to restrain himself further

I try again while the unfortunate *Bishop* shifts from

adequate bedding, on floor of stone veranda which is well ventilated by ice-cold wind in front of hospital lavatory (non flush) which has no door and is evidently used by many sufferers from dysentery

November 7 Orderly responsible for cleaning lavatory apparently dead Shamrao somewhat better I develop heavy cold

November 9 Missionary lady comes over from large and comfortable bungalow and remarks how *bracing* this fine cold weather is. Rise from floor on which I have been squatting and reading *Poems of Felicity* to greet her with old world courtesy but am unable to endorse her curious statement.

November 18 Take Shamrao to Poona for treatment at the Sassoon Hospital and stay myself at the Servants of India Society where catering and company are as usual beyond praise Lunch in city with perhaps over zealous disciple of Mahatma Gandhi who informs me in severe voice that no one who eats salt can possibly expect to retain his chastity Constrained by this to leave large helping of this commodity on side of my plate untouched while I swallow rather tasteless dal and rice as best I can At close of meal am given bowl of milk and according to lifelong custom remove skin and drape it over side. Disciple again rebukes me by pointing out that no poor man could afford to waste food like that. In spite of this find myself totally incapable of eating depressed looking bit of crumpled skin and leave dining room feeling both immoral and an oppressor

Meet Hindu friend who tells me that he had once thought of becoming a Christian owing to remarkable

June 15. Leave for Europe, while Shamrao goes for three months' medical training.

November 1. Arrive again in Bombay with gramophone (old), stuffed African mongoose, rather sentimental statue of St Francis, and ancient leopard skin, on which I have to pay customs duty of Rs 16, which strikes me as excessive. Met by charming young Brahmin, Srikant, who is to help us for a time and who gives me news that Shamrao is seriously ill, so leave by Calcutta Mail that night.

November 3. Arrive in Pendra Road at midnight and am met by carpenter with good news that Shamrao is better. A fine symbol—midnight, a village carpenter, good news! In early morning go to mission hospital and find Shamrao entirely alone, except for carpenter, and weak and thin. Custom in most Indian hospitals to provide only medicine, nursing and cooking to be performed by wives. This is inevitable in view of caste restrictions, but falls rather heavily on those who, like Shamrao, have neither caste nor wives. However, as he is just able to walk, I obtain his discharge at once. See three cars and a bullock-cart standing in mission compound, and ask—hoping for more—for loan of bullock-cart to carry Shamrao to dak bungalow two miles distant. Rather offhand lady regrets that it, and also presumably the three cars, are engaged, so we walk very slowly and in the middle of the day back to the bungalow, and S. is so excited at my return that he is none the worse for it.

November 6. Srikant, with other helpers and small dog of good family named Rajah, go up to Karanjia. Shamrao has relapse with very alarming temperature, and we return to hospital. Camp, with singularly in-

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It is so long since I listened to lectures organized by Alliance of Honour that really have forgotten answer to this question, so try to pass it off by asking if he approves of inter-dining between members of different castes

'Ram Ram, Ram, Ram, Ram My boy dines with low-caste Today, he takes tobacco Tomorrow he inter-dines. The day after, he elopes with girl Then you don't know how to keep pure? I tell you Never look on woman Bow head in her presence, as Lakshman never saw anything but the feet of Sita'—not very helpful this I thought, for a foot fetishist. 'See that. Bow head Not one single little peep If you allow only one little crack in your soul, just big enough for ant to get through, chastity will run out.'

Tiring somewhat of the chastity motif, I rise and ask for bill

'We shall not talk of bill My assistant will bring Truly some well-disposed deity directed you here Would you had stayed longer You really keep pure without surgical operation? You are very fortunate. Would you had stayed longer Today we are acquaintances tonight we had been friends, tomorrow, we had been brothers. After all this the least I expect is a free dinner but when assistant brings bill, find that I have been overcharged

November 29 Arrive back in Karanjia, and immediately put in hand extension of Ashram Everything is done in Gond style by Gonds with result that a most picturesque and uncomfortable set of buildings are produced. The one literate woman in neighbourhood writes names of every building in letters of mud upon the walls. Find dog Rajah fully established as member

effect of praying to Christ during games of tennis that he might win But later, he began studying the *Bhagavadgita*, and learning there that it was a matter of profound indifference whether he won or not he remained a Hindu

November 25 Returning to Karanjia, find myself faced with four hours wait at Katni Go outside station to small building inscribed Ryall Hindu Restrunt' and order a Second Class Gentleman's dinner This is served to me by the proprietor himself who having learnt my name is anxious to serve a person of such importance

This is greatest of honours he began—his English was almost as inadequate as his dinner— to have great man of learning at my table One day very soon I shall give up all to follow you as your disciple But now let me tell you how to be *sannyasi* A *sannyasi* must not stay more than twenty four hours in one place If he stay longer the first day he is an acquaintance in two days he is a friend in four days he has a wife and children He must eat nothing to excite passions—no chilli which gives birth to anger and no meat. A man eats meat today and tomorrow he wants two dozen women in his harem You can only subdue passions on half full belly

This seems to me strange doctrine for a hotel keeper and I say so

What care I for hotel? I tell you You must cut down your food from thirty two fistfulls to twenty nine, then to twenty seven and then to nineteen And I can charge as much for twenty as for thirty two But tell me you unmarried man? Then how you keep pure? Tell me method I want to know best method

December 31 Deputy Commissioner of Bilaspur arrives with relief expedition consisting of medical officer, saying that although I am outside his criminal, I am within his spiritual jurisdiction M O gives me enormous and painful injection, but we are all much cheered by visit, and I begin to feel better

of Ashram but fear is *not* strictly vegetarian as we at present are trying to be

December 1 Dispensary now unrecognizable so well equipped is it no longer with fool proof pills but with tinctures acids spirits minor surgical apparatus and sinister looking rubber tubes Play gramophone for first time to immense excitement of villagers who go round and round it trying to find out where the noise comes from and finally decide that there must be a little man sitting inside the box

December 20 Shamrao returns looking somewhat worn but almost immediately begins to improve Make desperate attempts to introduce spinning and carding having been given to understand that this is the only really valid form of village service but as no cotton grows in locality difficult to make it a business proposition Besides Gonds all say that they don t want to waste their time working and would much rather dance Try to perform daily *yagna (sacrifice)* of spinning myself but only Srikant—whose character has been purified in jail—joins me in this pious exercise Shamrao suggests that as he will be an invalid for at least three more months his cross is already heavy enough Do not believe this

December 25 Thirty or forty children come to dinner and in evening villagers perform highly inappropriate dances in front of chapel

December 27 Develop very alarming jungle fever which even Shamrao now accomplished amateur physician finds beyond his powers

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January 5 Fever definitely over and begin to crawl slowly about Ashram wishing that (possibly mistaken?) adherence to Gandhian principles had not prevented me from laying in stock of beer

January 10 Montessori school now in full swing under direction of enthusiastic young colleague who, despite tendency to talk like Rabindranath Tagore is evidently adept at child psychology Tremble to think, however what will be the result of any further development of tactile sense of Gonds.

January 14 Pleasant sensation of being almost an Early Christian developed by outbreak of opposition in all directions. Ancient witch of terrifying aspect, again threatens cook with lingering death if he continues to work for us. Forest official spreads alarming tale that we are secretly planning to carry children away to England and there forcibly convert them to Christianity

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Another faction dubs our village Isaitola, or the Jesus Village, to the great wrath of its inhabitants.

January 17. Montessori children, I am told, can now definitely distinguish between concept of noise and concept of sound. My own senses apparently less highly developed, for when I suggest that noise is what is produced by children at time of morning bath (which they resent) and sound is accompaniment of their mid-day meal, I am regarded as merely flippant

January 19 First full moon and Children's Festival. Boys dress, or rather undress, as *sadhus*, covering their bodies with ash, and go from house to house, dancing and begging a little rice or salt When they have enough, they bring wood from the jungle, and the little girls prepare a feast

January 28 Density of population in this district supposed to be only eighty eight to the square mile but, to anyone living in the Ashram it seems more like eight hundred and eighty-eight Build very curious little hut at back of chapel with concealed entrance, so as to have some corner in which to escape this constant publicity

February 4 The dog Rajah eaten by a panther. Am misguided not to say heartless, enough to write in a waggishness following account of his death in a letter circulated to friends

I have to record a tragic event—the death of the youngest member of our Ashram Brother Rajah, who has been killed by a panther Rajah was a true Franciscan, though I grieve to say that he was never admitted to formal membership of the Church of England His punctuality at meals and his constant cheerfulness even after them set an example to us all I have never known anyone less tainted with race

prejudice On the evening of his death he had been sitting listening with that air of quiet resignation which so became him to a long discussion on the New Morality when he got up and left the room for Fully Adequate Reasons. Out in the dark a panther was waiting for just such an addition to his diet There was a swift leap and without a bark Rajah was gathered to his canine fathers.

February 8 Shamrao removes all hair from his head (though not by painful method—advocated by Jain ascetics—of plucking it out hair by hair) in order he says to become more spiritual Whether this treatment will succeed or no remains to be seen but the rest of us by looking at him will undoubtedly increase our soul force purifying effects of pain being well known and Shamrao now looks like Schopenhauer s idea of the real nature of the Universe

February 12 Though children and parents alike show utmost suspicion of our school chiefly on curious ground that we do not beat the children and therefore must have something up our sleeves dispensary is thronged with patients from wide circle of villages. Old man makes four days journey to beg for something that will take him to another world Gonds have extensive medical tradition of their own but their jungle remedies they say no longer work in this Kali Yug the Age of Darkness which began when Government took forest from them However routine seems to have been esta blished that sick persons should first try Gond medicine then go for a little faith healing at the nearest magician s, and then when all hope is past come to us. The other day there was a child in village suffering from what would probably be called prolapsus of the intestine.

Another faction dubs our village Isaitola, or the Jesus Village, to the great wrath of its inhabitants

January 17. Montessori children, I am told, can now definitely distinguish between concept of noise and concept of sound My own senses apparently less highly developed, for when I suggest that noise is what is produced by children at time of morning bath (which they resent) and sound is accompaniment of their mid day meal, I am regarded as merely flippant

January 19 First full moon and Children's Festival Boys dress, or rather undress, as *sadhus*, covering their bodies with ash, and go from house to house, dancing and begging a little rice or salt When they have enough, they bring wood from the jungle, and the little girls prepare a feast

January 28 Density of population in this district supposed to be only eighty eight to the square mile but to anyone living in the Ashram it seems more like eight hundred and eighty-eight Build very curious little hut at back of chapel with concealed entrance, so as to have some corner in which to escape this constant publicity

February 4 The dog Rajah eaten by a panther Am misguided, not to say heartless enough to write in a waggishness following account of his death in a letter circulated to friends

I have to record a tragic event —the death of the youngest member of our Ashram Brother Rajah who has been killed by a panther Rajah was a true Franciscan, though I grieve to say that he was never admitted to formal membership of the Church of England His punctuality at meals, and his constant cheerfulness even after them, set an example to us all I have never known anyone less tainted with race

head. By midnight we reach Dindori and take shelter in Dak Bungalow and am able to dry clothes in front of smouldering fire. Up early next morning but bus again starts five hours late Not for first time regret my lack of a really violent temper About 11.0 go down to motor stand vowing to tear driver to pieces, and find him calmly beginning to cook his dinner Blow off steam at him in execrable Hindi—and he smiles and invites me to share the meal and before I know where I am we are roaring with laughter together and the bus is two hours later still When we do start we make good progress for thirty miles and then stick in a river After trying to get the car out for over an hour I suggest that it would be lighter to move if the purdah ladies would very kindly descend But as this suggestion seems generally regarded as tantamount to proposing an assault on their virtue and I become a sort of moral outcast at once decide to go on by myself and walk the remaining twelve miles home After three miles it begins to rain again and soon gets pitch dark Lose my way wandering about in fields and jungle trying to get direction by light of vivid flashes of lightning Have already in imagination read several of my own obituary notices, when a specially bright flash reveals that I am standing within a few yards of home With a loud cry I dash inside only to prove truth of saying of R.L.S. that it is better to travel hopefully than to arrive for it has been raining steadily in Karanjia since I left and there is not a dry spot in the Ashram.

February 27 Develop chicken pox, presumably Nature's way of reminding me that I am still a child,

Parents catch a river crab, roast it and give it to child to eat. Child is completely cured.

February 18. Go on expedition to Mandla on business concerning land, and am lavishly entertained by lawyer whose acquaintance I make in bus. Nearly drowned in storm of rain which, most unseasonably, bursts upon us.

February 22 As these are the days of great Amarkantak Fair, buses are running all way from Mandla to Karanjia and beyond, roads having been specially repaired for this purpose Book seat in bus scheduled to start at 10 0 a m and take my seat at 1 30 At 2 0 rain begins to fall, while bus is slowly loaded with tins of kerosene oil, purdah ladies, baskets of vegetables, bedding, men of God, peasants and a policeman. At 3 0 we make a start, and a few miles out of Mandla run into a heavy storm No side screens, and roof leaks in three places just above my head. Cover myself with thickest blanket at my disposal, but this affords no real protection, for water steadily trickles down my back and a small pond rises about my feet Rain, in gusts of relentless ferocity, blows sideways through window

An hour's rain quite sufficient to transform this district into a sea of mud, and to place swollen rivers, roads like ploughed fields and fallen trees between us and civilization By nightfall, bus is crawling over mountain roads through forest at about four miles an hour, sometimes going sideways like an enormous crab, sometimes stopping dead with the engine screaming and wheels whirling in clouds of mud, and sometimes stalling altogether in uncanny silence broken only by moans of frightened purdah ladies, the weird cries of unseen animals, and appalling crashes of thunder over-

of God. Walking in the forest by moonlight, following lines occur to me

THE BEYOND THAT IS AKIN

My Good Companion up above
Is full of hearty human love
To Heaven He will let me in
To the Beyond that is Akin

A boundless subjectivity
Is what appeals to modern me
And all my honest doubt I pin
On the Beyond that is Akin

Let Otto talk of Holiness
Vast truths at which we dimly guess
I simply give a friendly grin
At the Beyond that is Akin

But though it's good to have a link
With Heaven yet I sometimes think
Theology is wearing thin
With this Beyond that is Akin

March 18 Discover rats have been drinking our oil by ingenious method of letting down their tails into tin and sucking the tips. Karanjia rats show special liking however for literature especially for the more solid philosophical reviews. Shamrao set a trap for them last week and baited it with oil-seed fried in ghee and suchlike vulgar delicacies, but of course without success. What he should have done was to set it with a few pages of the *Hibbert Journal*. Only this morning they broke into library and ate a copy of the *Revue d'Ascétique et de Mystique*

March 21 Magic lantern arrives, and we spend several hours trying to make it work before we discover

but cannot understand why so many visitors should have chosen just this week to come and see me

March 3 Complete works of Saki arrive just in time to save me from dying of humiliation over vesicular disfigurement

March 10 As so few children seem anxious to come to school decide to carry education to the Very Doors of the Masses and draw up complicated scheme of night schools for four villages This means that every night we are to go out to a village and occupy somebody's house There we play gramophone distribute medicine teach the alphabet and lecture on such subjects as Simple Laws of Health Simple Laws of Prosperity Simple Laws of Sex (this very popular subject) a little geography science and history Decide to get magic lantern to help forward this scheme Note that for every thousand Gonds in this district only four are literate and name our plan rather ambitiously an Anti Illiteracy Campaign

March 12 Even to this remote valley, however, some elements of European culture have penetrated Today while teaching a boy a little English a Gond who is sitting by announces that he too has been in touch with sahibs and knows their language Ask eagerly for evidence of his acquaintance with the tongue of Shakespeare and Milton 'Damn fool bloody pig' he says.

March 14 Friend in England sends me account of a sermon by very modern divine who had altered great and profound phrase 'The Beyond that is Within' into 'The Beyond that is Akin', apparently in the interest of the curious new doctrine of the Brotherhood

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dean. Forest Department fines them for failing to pay this tax on sanitation

April 25 Rather unpleasant pock marked youth chased by even more unpleasant snake for over a mile Finally caught and bitten but beyond turning black for a few hours suffers no further ill-effects.

May 2 Very exciting wedding in village Bridegroom is member of Tiger Sept that is he has special relations with the tiger world and is under its protection In middle of proceedings which even normally bear a closer resemblance to an O.U.D.S Smoker than anything else four celebrants become possessed with spirit of tiger At once they begin to roar in alarming fashion jump in the air and bounce about on all fours Presently they leap on a goat and tearing open its throat with their teeth drink the hot blood

May 8 Old Ganpat still after blanket attempts to awaken the benefactor by interesting the naturalist in me Points out bird of sin who once when her husband was going on a journey poured ashes on his head instead of flowers and was lucky not to have her beak cut off for doing so At all events her mate matter went off with another girl and now all she can do is to cry all day long *mor pihu mor pihu* my love my love The hyena also according to old Ganpat is no better than it ought to be It goes by night to any newly made grave and stamps on it five times with its right forefoot Then the corpse rises slowly from the ground of its own accord and the hyena does the rest.

May 10 Having announced in my letter the facts noted under February 4 of this year am inundated with letters of sympathy many friends having taken Rajah to be a human being Extremely difficult letters

that makers have omitted to send essential part of the apparatus

March 28 Night-schools enthusiastically attended by about three hundred villagers in all Pleasant sight of children teaching their parents to read Montessori school even more flourishing with twenty little poly morphous perverts busily developing their tactile, ductile visual and aural senses Possibly however, Montessori Gospel not so much needed here as elsewhere for Gonds must have the least inhibited children in the world Angelic looking babes of six have command of language that would flatter a costermonger

April 10 Visit to Kapildara waterfall of great fame and sanctity seven miles away Tradition is that water will only fall on head of a saint but shrinks back in horror from all sinners Shamrao and I walk beneath falls in confident expectation of being able to pass dry shod to the other side but we must be better men than we thought for we both get thoroughly wet—Shamrao to my annoyance a little wetter than myself

April 13 Lantern now in working order but develop curious tendency no doubt rooted obscurely in my Id to tread on pipe connecting gas generator with lantern thus extinguishing flame

April 15 Exceptionally impecunious Baigas who earn scanty living by beating drum at weddings come with story of woe the face of their drum having been eaten by rats and are curiously unconsoled by story of my copy of North s *Plutarch* having suffered same fate They are followed by party of women who have just been caught bringing without licence white mud from hills with which to make their houses neat and

clean. Forest Department fines them for failing to pay this tax on sanitation

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to answer to say nothing of moral problem whether donations excited by supposedly dangerous conditions of our existence should be returned or no

May 12 Shamrao delivers lantern lecture on Japan but his fund of information evaporating halfway through he calls on me for help On spur of moment however can think of nothing whatever about Japan except poetry of Hitomaro and curious sex philosophy of Samurai but feel this hardly suited to rustic audience Create usual diversion by treading on gas pipe and lecture ends

May 14 Magnificent looking cowherd brought to us by dhobi as auxiliary cook Sohori the Ahir for such is this superman s name at once makes himself at home He has long black hair a string of vivid red beads against glorious brown throat and when drunk can perform unusually romantic dances Have little doubt that in a week or two he will have made himself indispensable

May 17 *Universal excitement in village over the elopement of Tiblu long considered our local saint with the Gond wife of Hyder Ali s brother* After this no one can be considered safe As our cook says You never know where the blow will fall next This makes the nineteenth elopement from our village within the year

May 18 Heavy rain all day Large company gathers in dispensary where corpulent policeman soon takes centre of stage with stories about robbers and tigers The Baigas says he can close the jaws of a tiger and lead it about by the ear When Lord Reading he says came to hunt in this district a Baiga warned all the tigers to leave the jungle and the

Viceroy had to give a hundred rupees before he would permit them to return. The Baiga then led them one by one before the Viceroy's elephant with the result that thirty two were shot. These stories accepted by all especially by the Baigas present with enthusiasm

May 19 After usual hour of agitated preparations and excellent tea prepared by Shamrao go with large party for an expedition to Ramnagar, small village under the shade of tallest hill in district called Dhuti Arriving about six, Shamrao plays gramophone (which we have rather injudiciously allowed him to bring) to the villagers We are accommodated in tumbledown and indescribably dirty hut known as the Rest House —for minor officials. After supper which is not ready till 9.30 Shamrao again plays the gramophone. At midnight party from another village comes for the 'tamasha' so Shamrao plays the thing again the frequent repetition of the same two records giving pleasure to one and all At 2.0 a.m. go out and try to sleep in a field but am discovered and dragged back to a short and bug infested bed On asking why it is that what the Gonds call beds are made so short I am told that it is to prevent evil spirits sitting on the end and looking at you. As always, theology can make almost any discomfort bearable and fall asleep in a glow of religious enthusiasm

May 20 Up at 5.0 a.m. to climb hill for the Ashram expects every man to do his Dhuti. On way up disturb large wild animal of indeterminate breed asleep in a cave Magnificent view from top and on return make friends with most of the village

May 23 Activities of Ashram at present mainly spent in Suffering well known to be most powerful

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agent active in world today Shamrao has what he calls bad bronchitis I bad temper Srikant fever A great storm of rain at night and the roofs not yet lined with leaves to make them waterproof

May 31 Shamrao talks at night school on English Social Life which he vividly illustrates by putting on an old black suit of mine but as the collar has been lost he looks like a cross between an East-end Thug and a *music hall comedian* He gives a clear idea of the exact *geographical position of London by telling the villagers that if they go towards the sunrise that is where it is*

June 2 Sensational visit of American *missionary with large double barrelled gun and twelve high school* boys doing village uplift They show much interest in children's school and missionary who is a Ph.D tells his company that Madame Montessori was an American and that therefore they must pay close attention to her *methods Before leaving they sing* Negro *Spiritual beginning rather surprisingly* Hallo Brother Elwin *how do you do! Interesting diversion caused by discovery of cobra under bed of young mem*ber of Ashram It had been there *he says for four* days hidden in a box and yesterday he says it ate a mouse Asked why *he left it there says he thought it* was a large toad

June 3 Police come to inquire about American missionary who after leaving us illegally shot a deer Get high fever and interesting delirium connected with ultimate *fate of Royal Family Go to Heaven* and meet Disraeli *Dr Stanley Jones and* Tennyson's famous Ale Wife at *the celestial inn The Sign of the Homoousios* but harmony of proceedings marred

through Disraeli showing marked signs of impatience with conversation of Dr Stanley Jones

June 6 Shamrao gives lecture on malaria at Bondar Asks Who are our greatest enemies? A voice Our wives General impression in villages as result of health propaganda that syphilis is spread by mosquitoes

June 16 Dhobi reports popular view of me that I am immensely wealthy and live as I do in order so to engage the favour of the Gods that they will give me more money still Idea common in Europe that the ascetic life creates good impression on the oriental mind clearly very erroneous.

June 17 Children protest against music lesson in school We have come here for knowledge not to sing In afternoon three of the most sinister snakes I have ever seen invade my room simultaneously Totally unable to handle situation but have one infallible remedy in all such circumstances—I jump on bed and shout for Shamrao By the time he comes snakes have all disappeared into different parts of the building Lengthy snake-hunt follows and ultimately all three are killed Later in day begin to suspect that snakes were less deadly than they looked.

June 18 Definitely established that snakes were not the deadly krait but the harmless Sat Bahini the Good Sisters whom they resemble Feel like a murderer all day At night another large snake in Ashram which escapes.

June 21 Ashram as usual full of children In afternoon staggered by hearing Shamrao sing in loud and throaty voice *It's a Long Way to Tipperary* in order to give admiring audience some idea of English music. The Ashram of St Francis however clearly

unwilling to put up with such martial noises and at 5 40 precisely the entire west wall falls flat with a loud indignant crash, discovering view of great beauty across the valley Buy a baby leopard which Shamrao rather daringly takes to bed with him A lovely little creature a Jawaharlal Nehru among leopards all breed and backbone

June 22 Roused at 2 0 a m by escape of baby leopard Loud roaring outside suggests theory that mother has come to fetch it back and insist that prolonged leopard hunt both unnecessary and hazardous *Hunt however is kept up till dawn but without* success

July 1 Make tour of villages to say good bye before departing to Bombay for the rains All goes well till we come to the official village school where we find schoolmaster supervising the work of seven of our own villagers whom he has impounded for forced and unpaid labour Great row follows in which everyone talks at the top of his voice and the schoolmaster (who has been modern enough to dye his beard a vivid scarlet) waves his arms and wags his beard like an agitated minor prophet Announce my intention of putting down forced labour in bad Hindi but heroic tones Returning home after prayer and a nicely balanced meal proceed to present everyone who submitted to the forced labour with bangles this apparently being the Eastern equivalent for the white feather A profound sensation thus created especially after we have told the village headman who was really responsible what we think of him till we are hoarse

July 2 Headman sends long winded and rather facetious epistle, hoping that I have recovered from my bad

temper of the previous evening, and asking for a loan of fifty rupees and an electric torch He arrives a little later in person and, with most of the village, spends the greater part of the day sitting in the Ashram After all, one may as well be there as anywhere else, and there may be some pickings

July 3 Depart, leaving Ashram in charge of Sohori and very serious minded and trustworthy Mussalman, Mustapha Khan Large crowd assembled for farewells, covers the hill and looks very pretty, the women in coloured saris and the children in gaily-coloured school clothes Distinguished company, representing both Church and State including a magician two witches, Ganpat as the Oldest Inhabitant, our local Man of God, our Mussalman friend Hyder Ali a Forest Guard, and the Headman still hoping for his torch see us on our way

July 15 Arrive in Poona to see Bapu who is staying at the great marble palace, Parnakuti, where he has been fasting on behalf of the untouchables. Met at station with message that Bapu has invited me to stay there with him but on reaching house am told with some embarrassment that I am to go to Servants of India Society instead Wait for some hours in great antechamber full of persons of Importance but like Sir William Lucas at Lady Catherine's I do not say much but store my memory with anecdotes and noble names At last see Bapu for three minutes and find him exhausted after his long fast but full of happiness and wit Take tea afterwards with famous poetess whom I now meet for first time She makes the usual remark—of which I have now grown a little tired —that she expected to find me an old old man with a

beard Retort by telling her how I have recently received an advertisement of lantern slides illustrating the Great Men of the World The first four names were Jesus Christ Lord Buddha Mrs Sarojini Naidu and Maulana Shaukat Ali

July 16 At the Servants of India Society meet for the first time Mr Shrinivasa Shastri after the Mahatma the greatest Indian I have seen Have a long talk with him about the Gonds Find he is against bringing the corruptions of the electoral machine to the aboriginals They should first be represented on the Councils by nominated spokesmen and then by some of their own leaders You must go slow—ly slow—ly he says

In the evening go to dinner with some very delightful Europeans in business at Poona There sit for dinner famous poetess Mr Shastri Mr Kodanda Rao (Editor of *The Servants of India* and Puck to his friends) a pleasant Mussalman lady and myself Charming to see Mr Shastri chuckling away at great poetess's jokes and despite his years putting down a very sensible quantity of food Our hostess dopes his glass of milk with brandy while he isn't looking Famous poetess now reveals why I had not been allowed to stay at the Marble Palace Mr Elwin she says arrived from the station looking quite dirty enough to be a Kashmiri Brahmin and Bapu was encouraged to suggest to his hostess that she should extend him her hospitality — But there are not enough rooms she exclaimed That doesn't matter he can pig it anywhere — But there are not enough bathrooms — That doesn't matter he never washes — But there are not enough of the Other Places — That doesn't matter he never needs them he sublimates it — But you know she says coming into

the open at last, 'that I will never have Christians stay ing in my house'—'And even for us' concludes famous poetess 'she is going to smash all the crockery we used and have special ceremonies of purification after we have gone'

F P also tells a story about her entertainment of an Indian Minister of Agriculture along with a young English girl The Minister, after ogling the pretty pink cheeks of the latter for a time bent forward and point ing to them said 'Miss, is it natural?' When later she remonstrated with him he said 'I understand Western chit-chat and talking to-and fro At Viceroy's dinners I always get a lady to take in'—'And what do you talk about?'—'Oh I always ask their ages'

Our host describes how his mother, who is very old, had been to see Bapu the previous day and had tried to convert him to Christianity Bapu beaming all over, took her face between his hands and said, 'You sweet little darling wonderful ninety year-old missionary, if God wants me to walk in your path He will make me do so'

July 17 Go to Cinema with Mr Shrinivasa Shastri feeling very important at being seen in such a place with a Privy Councillor Tense moment when the heroine is caught in the villain's bedroom and offered her honour or her life and a hush falls on audience, in midst of which Mr Shastri's voice booms through the theatre Aha now she's trapped in the seducer's den'

July 24 Bapu goes to Ahmedabad and we to Bombay and after a day or two a card comes inviting us to Sabarmati Shamrao has joined me by now and we set off by the Kathiawad Mail.

July 25 Our welcome very very different from Poona

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July 25 Our welcome very very different from Poona

Bapu staying in charming, and comparatively simple, bungalow on the outskirts of Ahmedabad untroubled by crowds At once shown into the Presence. 'Shamrao looks as if he had risen from the dead,' says Bapu, grinning all over his face.

As usual we are woken up in the middle of the night for prayers and as I am sleeping beside the Mahatma, I hop out of bed with some celerity Shamrao, however, for once does not seem to be in the mood for prayer, and stays where he is until suddenly Bapu ejaculates 'Shamrao' in a tone of voice that makes it sound like a peculiarly bad swear word, and Shamrao shoots out of bed, his features contorted into a hastily assumed expression of piety

Find Bapu in a perfect rapture of renunciation and have never seen him so happy He has disbanded the Congress and now he is disbanding the Sabarmati Ashram, and proposes to hand the buildings to Government or to anyone else who wants them He is breaking all the ties that hold him to the world Only by uttermost renunciation can his cause succeed He is gathering round him a tiny company of political ascetics who will be dead to the world owning nothing vowed to celibacy ready to go to jail again and again till their hairs are grey The jail will be their monastery the coarse jail dress their religious habit the prison bell their Angelus the Superintendent and Jailor their Abbot and Prior Fetters and handcuffs will take the place of hair shirt and scourge For some time the members of the Ashram have been living on jail food so that they may be ready

In the afternoon Bapu took us to the Ashram It is an astonishing sight to see everybody going about their

daily tasks as though nothing were ever going to happen although they know that on August 1 the Ashram will be abandoned and most of them go to jail After eighteen years their life is to be broken up it will die in order to find fuller life It is impossible to understand the latest developments in Indian political life apart from the ideal of renunciation The penance of the nation has been inadequate people are still clinging to property to pleasure to the claims of family—all these ties must be broken if the nation is to be free

Then you regard the monastic life as the highest of all? I asked Bapu 'Certainly he replied It is the highest development of the human spirit But it must be pure The collapse of Buddhist monasticism was due to its becoming comfortable And I have been afraid that our own Ashram was in similar danger But now (beaming all over) it will be no longer comfortable I should think not.

Bapu introduces me to astonishing American disciple who has attached herself to his reluctant court She has shaved off her hair and wears a shirt and dhoti in order she says to forget that she is a woman This does not however prevent her approaching the Manager of the Ashram (who is the incarnation of Victorian and Puritan respectability) with the news that her Inner Voice is urging her to dance at the evening prayers.

July 26 Return to Bombay and go into K.E.M Hospital Occupy same room that was once used by old friend Richard Gregg

July 30 Take precaution of visiting operating theatre to see what really happens Much encouraged by sight of elderly gentleman under local anæsthesia

carrying on animated conversation about state of the Share Market while large portions of his inside are being removed

July 31 Wake feeling very important and not nearly so nervous as I expected Go through the preliminary ritual of being shaved all over and painted a bright yellow with picric acid Talk in slightly hushed voice to emphasize dignity of occasion About 10 0 given a delicious injection of morphia (will this possibly turn me into a drug fiend?) but unable to enjoy this fully as room rapidly fills with large company of friends who having heard that visitors will be admitted to the gallery are clearly determined to miss nothing

Operation by famous surgeon under local anæsthesia exceedingly interesting Seth Jamnalalji arrives in nick of time and sits by my head but Shamrao not allowed to do so For My Own Good the Matron tells me So Shamrao and Srikant with rather distinguished company of friends including gentleman in pink turban whom I have never seen before go up to the gallery and watch from there waving cheerfully to me at intervals All goes well till unfortunately half way through experience sensation of being poured out like water and considerable agony as anæsthetic wears off Very properly decide this is no occasion for stoicism so shout at top of my voice and I am given chloroform which I breathe in with utmost relief and pleasure On waking find a regular tea party in progress round bed and extremely pretty nurse puts bits of ice in my mouth Feel very cheerful till nightfall when alarming pains begin and am unable to convince house surgeon of necessity for another dose of that delightful morphia

August 9 Stitches removed. Hospital cat places litter of kittens under my bed

August 10 Matron points out in austere voice that pets not permitted in hospital This under the circumstances seems to me a little hard but I submit and kittens removed forthwith Shamrao begins to study at the Municipal V.D Clinic and Srikant goes for a year to Shantiniketan

August 22 About to be discharged when suddenly attacked by malaria. Usual reflections about the Royal Family Recall that I never yet met anyone in India who had not an infallible cure for malaria Once met a man who claimed to have been completely cured by having a red hot poker applied to his left heel Director of famous firm once told me to plant tulsi all round my house Know a learned doctor in South India who makes his patients sleep in the goat shed where they soon forget all other sufferings

Someone brings me from the library a singularly grubby and insignificant looking book with a singularly interesting inside All about malaria by one Jones. The point made by this Jones is that it was malaria that ruined Greece and Rome. With a great deal of learning he proves that it was between 500 and 300 B C. that the Greeks lost their vigour and their brains They became less patriotic in politics sentimental in art pessimistic in philosophy And at the very same time malaria arrived in Greece and has been there ever since. Today two in every five Greeks have it.

It came probably from Africa. Herodotus describes how the marsh-dwellers in Egypt used to wrap themselves up by night in the nets with which they had fished by day What nights they must have had! In

456 B.C. the Athenians were ill advised enough to go to Egypt on some sort of war, and not having their fishing nets with them all got malaria and brought it back to Attica The Romans got it also but where malaria made the Greeks weak and inefficient it made the Romans bloodthirsty and brutal

Be that as it may one thing is certain that malaria is 'perhaps the most incapacitating disease to which man is liable' It does not kill it weakens and depresses and the race afflicted by it tends to moral and physical degeneration

Mauritius was an earthly paradise till the mosquitoes started biting in 1866

The Japanese have a certain immunity from malaria China is ravaged by it How much that explains! S America has it N America is free W Africa has it S Africa is comparatively free The contrasts are enormous

Just the kind of cheerful reading for the sick bed But very important If India is to be free she must be fit The quinine pill is as potent a weapon for freedom as the Gandhi cap

It is D H Lawrence who has drawn the classical picture of the mosquito that ghoul on wings that 'pointed fiend winged blood-drop sounding its 'small high hateful bugle in the ear

> I beheld you stand
> For a second enspasmed in oblivion
> Obscenely ecstasied
> Sucking live blood
> My blood
>
> Such silence such suspended transport
> Such gorging

Such obscenity of trespass
How can you put so much devilry
Into that frail translucent phantom shred
Of a frail corpus?

Queer with your thin wings and your streaming legs
How you sail like a heron or a dull clot of air,
A nothingness

August 26 My treatment chart remarks laconically, 'Icteric discoloration noted' A courteous phrase I am unaware of my fate and laugh at it.

Jaundice!

What a disease!

There is none of the fine frenzy of malaria nor the pathetically pompous importance of an operation 'It's only jaundice,' say your friends, and cease their visits.

Only jaundice!

But there are others who understand. These are they who have themselves succumbed to this Yellow Peril, they have themselves been drowned in this Rising Tide of Colour They are an elect group a body of initiates

Jaundice as they know well may be divided into three Purgatories In the first Purgatory, which lasts a fortnight you feel as if you were in a rowing boat in the Bay of Biscay during a storm It is like being on a merry-go-round which has forgotten to stop There is no cure. Is there no hope? you ask the doctor 'Well' he replies with a gentle smile of encouragement 'the liver may atrophy and then you die at once. But—' with that splendid oriental indifference to temporal things which we so admire in the West—' it will pass. Yes probably it will pass.'

The second *Purgatory is the Great Fast In the* Middle Ages, the standard time for fasting was forty days. Now, in view *of the rush and hurry of modern* life, twenty-one days is normally considered adequate *It has always mortified me that I seem so totally un*able to recapture the ecstasies of the saints in their fasts. *I always enjoy my most profoundly religious sensations* when I am on a regime of high living and plain think*ing When I fast I think of nothing whatever but* food I remember everything I have ever eaten

Happily for this stage there is a certain cure Turn to your Pickwick and enjoy the pleasures of vicarious *eating—the broiled fowl and mushrooms so dear* to Mr Jingle the lunch in the Wardles carriage at Roch*ester (fowls capon pigeon pie tongue veal and ham* lobsters and veal patties are specifically mentioned) the *cold punch and beer on Captain Boldwig's land the* cod fish and oyster barrels which Mr Pickwick brought *as a present to Manor Farm the snap-dragon* and mistletoe and wassail of the Christmas Party when they got there and last but not least the little warm supper of a couple of sets of pettitoes and some toasted cheese at Mrs Bardell's The cheese was simmering away most delightfully in a little Dutch oven before the fire and the pettitoes were getting on deliciously in a tin saucepan on the hob

The third Purgatory is Melancholy In the *Timaeus* Plato describes how God put the liver where it was—at a discreet distance from the brain—because it has no faculty of sense and if it were higher up might disturb the mind by its obstinate rumblings He goes on to say that by contracting the liver and by obstructing and closing its ventricles and gates God causes im

pressions of pain and disgust'. How true this is! For six weeks my ventricles were obstructed and my soul was disgusted with mankind. My disgust was not lessened by the impossibility of getting anything to eat At the close of the second Purgatory I took up my Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, the sovereign regimen for this stage, and drew up what seemed to me would be a more or less adequate diet. 'My jaundice,' I told the doctor, 'is now cured. My only trouble is melancholy, and for that the best physicians of all ages have recommended this'—and I handed him a paper on which I had copied Burton's prescription for *The Rectification of Diet* At the top I wrote a quotation from someone called Rhasis—'Make a melancholy man fat and thou hast finished the cure'—and then

DIET SHEET

Young flesh and tender, as of kid, rabbits, chickens, veal, mutton, capons, hams, partridge, pheasant, quaills and all mountain birds.

All manner of broths and potage, with borage, lettuce, and such wholesome herbs.

Bread of good wheat pure, well purged from the bran

Perch trout gudgeon, smelts, flounders

Sweet cherries, marmalade of plums, sweet apples, pearmains, and pippins, quinces, pomegranates, ripe grapes, raisins of the sun, musk melons, figs, almonds blanched, peaches, pears—to strengthen the stomach and keep down vapours

Spinage, beets, bugloss, endive, fennel, aniseed, balm—but all corrected for wind.

Rose water to be used in every dish

The thinnest, whitest, smallest wine.

Middling beer

—and for fear of accidents I concluded with a note.

'Milk and all that comes of milk, as butter and cheese, curds, etc., increase melancholy; some except asses' milk.'

My doctor looked at this document a little coldly—*he is a vegetarian and teetotaller*—and rang the bell for a nurse 'Bring the patient's diet sheet, please She did so 'From tomorrow,' he began 'No, from this evening,' I interjected 'From tomorrow this patient will cease to live on glucose and barley water. He is to have a liberal diet Give him some curd, two oranges and an egg daily'

So I turned back to my Burton

The melancholy man [I read] is the cream of human adversity, the quintessence and upshot all other diseases whatever are but flea bitings to melancholy in extent; 'tis the pith of them all and a melancholy man is that true Prometheus which is bound to Caucasus the true Titius, whose bowels are still by a vulture devoured

September 18 Visited by hearty friend who says he is sorry to hear that I am seedy 'Seedy!'

September 20 Bapu comes to see me in wonderful spirits as usual and half the hospital assembles in my ward to look at him Am reminded of what Robert Hall said of Wilberforce 'Wilberforce Sir is a little creature he is an ugly creature but look in his face, hear him speak you forget it all, he is the incarnation of love'

October 5 About to be discharged when Shamrao —*who is now staying with me—falls ill instead* So settle down for our eleventh week of hospital Shamrao has obscure malady caused *apparently by eating* earth, which we assure everyone is *one of the normal* practices of Christian asceticism Perceptible rise of

prestige as a result. Attend lecture by celebrated Bombay venereologist who says the Chairman does not need an introduction to any one of us. Am apparently only member of audience to notice that this is one of those remarks that might be better put

October 8 Letter from my sister in Egypt who has gone there with her fishing net. I told one of our Evangelical ladies she writes that my brother had written a life of St Francis But said she looking at me in a cow like manner I understood that the Life of St Francis had been written some time ago

October 12 Actually discharged and depart with Shamrao to Matheran charming hill station near Bombay for convalescence.

October 20 Shamrao has recurrence of curious disease caused by eating earth Can this be a vice he is practising in private? I am moreover haunted by elderly Brahmin who has invented a new type of W C. and can talk of nothing else He has also designed what he calls a nose-bag which is to be worn on entering public lavatories for reasons which he describes at length Bear all this with some patience until he asks me how I manage to keep pure on which we both decide that convalescence is very over rated form of pleasure and depart hastily for Bombay

October 24 Leave Bombay for Karanjia. Very painful scene at railway station. Arrive rather late after heavy meal at Green s where I have been taken curiously enough by Jain friend to find train crowded Shamrao and new cook Maruti missing and in middl of baggage what appear to be three enormous tree sewn up in sacking Fail to recognize mango fi orange lime guava and other fruit bearing trees an

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tell station master that we have enough jungle at Karanjia already, and that he can keep this one for himself Five minutes before train is due to start, Shamrao—who has been getting me provisions—arrives and on discovering that I have given trees to station master, declares passionately 'You treat me like dog Those trees are worth hundreds of rupees' No time to point out that my subject was literature and theology not forestry as whistle blows and we have to climb hastily on board Shamrao repeating again and again 'You treat me like dog you treat me like dog' Can there be any link I wonder between Gallic and oriental temperaments?

October 26 Reach Pendra Road at midnight under sky of splendid stars and as soon as possible set out for Karanjia Very adventurous journey across flooded fields and three mountain ranges Horse carrying wheat and sugar falls into river

October 27 Arrive in dark after struggling along mountain paths for hours at tumbledown liquor shop on banks of a river Tumbledown liquor vendor apparently (and quite mistakenly) supposing me to be a Prohibitionist refuses (like lady in Poona) to admit me into house but offers us cow shed instead Remark incautiously that this is just like the Parable of Perfect Joy to which Shamrao replies that if this is Perfect Joy he has had enough of it and that if I say another word about St Francis he will go mad Subsequent events show deep common sense of this attitude After long argument liquor vendor admits us to warm room on condition that after our departure we employ a Hindu to purify it with cow-dung

October 29 Cross sacred waters of the Narbada

River into our own district Immediate change of tone Received at every village with great love and enthusiasm Take midday meal in guava grove of village six miles from Karanjia. Reach Ashram under brilliant moon about eight o clock and find all in perfect order and many vegetables and flowers planted by Mustapha Khan and Sohori in our absence Part of our wheat-store has been damaged by insects and a few books eaten by white ants among them being—unhappily—our Breeches Bible of 1588 (not of course really valuable but it sounds well) and an early Jeremy Taylor

October 30 Plant out the various trees which fortunately Shamrao had not allowed Bombay station master to keep and find that what I had mistaken for three was in reality forty Series of letters advising me variously to return to England and do something more important get married eat more vitamins and cease to be mixed up with so many heathens and trying to see the best in all their religions. Curious reflection aroused doubtless by contents of mail bag why people should be shocked at the opinion of Pythagoras concerning wild fowl How good to be reborn if one had to be reborn on this planet as an animal preferably as a prize pig in a novel by P G Wodehouse! Immense but unprofitable field of speculation thus opened must be left as bell sounds for lunch

November 10 Re-open childrens school with help of Kartik a Gond of astonishing ugliness the utmost amiability and unusual ability He is the father of four daughters and nearly related to old Ganpat which gives him a good deal of derived respectability Shamrao prepares great tin of tooth paste out of salt and

ashes, but children not yet wholly reconciled either to this or to hot bath.

November 11. Decide to start garden. No idea how to do this, but find a few marigolds and zinnias grow ing here and there on the hill, and transplant the most promising of these to chapel garden, where for some obscure reason Mustapha Khan has planted a row of seedy looking cabbages, apparently believing with Thackeray that,

> *There's not a plant in the garden laid,*
> *Raised by the dung dug by the spade,*
> *None by the gardener watered, I ween,*
> *So sweet as the cabbage the cabbage green*

November 12 Shamrao, now expert on distilled water and the Kahn Test, busy fitting up dispensary till, if only we had a stuffed crocodile, it would look like the shop of a medieval apothecary *Chimdu's wife, mother of little Ganesh, our Lady President of the local college of witches, casts spell on son of Julan* head of one of most important families in village and himself a wizard of repute because—she says—Julan thinks he's a 'gennleman (*Gondi for gentleman?*) and has got above himself But the little boy does suddenly die and when Julan has recovered from shock he goes to Chimdu's house, catches lady by the hair and beats her till his *urge for self-expression is fully satisfied* Chimdu goes at once to lay complaint at police station but so does Julan and he it is said *can pay more* so case proceeds no further

November 14 Maruti great success as cook and, what is more, of a miraculous affability Old Ganpat comes in state of utmost dejection with news that his almost equally aged wife has run away from him in

a rage—he had done nothing to rouse her temper only beaten her a little abused her parents and accused her of cuckolding him with half the youths of the village it was absurd to take offence at little details like that Meanwhile there is no one to cook for him Shamrao goes off to reason with old lady but does not find her easy *Perhaps* in a day *or* two she will come provided she is treated properly in future but at the moment she is quite comfortable where she is and she will have to think about it. There are plenty of young girls as the old man doubtless knows only *too* well who will be very glad to look after him

November 15 While carrying cup of tea through Ashram tread on very poisonous snake but to my great *pride neither* get *bitten nor* spill tea Village archangel Tiblu now slightly damaged suddenly re-appears having tired of his elopement and returns girl to her proper husband Girl at once adopts very strong attitude and tells the latter that if there is even a suggestion that she has been unfaithful she will go away again and that in future all money and property is to belong to her and he must do what he is told Husband so astonished by this that he meekly agrees and the couple set up house again in complete harmony Tiblu returns to his Tulsi Das and comes regularly for injections.

November 20 Decide to abandon policy of night schools and general benevolence and to concentrate instead on establishing a number of branch houses in various villages within a ten mile radius each in charge of a resident worker who will receive an allowance of *from ten to twelve* rupees a month. After lengthy and heated argument resolve that our first worker shall be Mustapha Khan faithful Mussalman who is model of

many virtues—in fact he yields perhaps rather too readily to the ideal demands of his Super Ego—and has only one serious fault he suffers from a persecution complex and is never really happy save when he is describing some horrid affront to us himself or his religion

November 21 Still feeling somewhat weak after prolonged illness in Bombay but well enough to go two miles to Bondar little village in neighbouring valley and choose site for branch Ashram on banks of River Kanwa very lovely spot red cliffs on one side and on the other forest climbing up the hills Rest in house of distinguished Gond clergyman named Panda Baba and feel much restored by pleasantly ecclesiastical atmosphere of building which is adorned with many symbols of his sacred calling—whips of horse-hair hang beside spiked iron scourges and sharp pointed rods for thrusting through cheeks or tongue during ecstatic dances On the floor are wooden shoes liberally served with iron spikes and in front of a little flagstaff is a glowing coal some marigolds and a bunch of peacock's feathers The Panda entertains us with great affability and condescension and undertakes all responsibility for the Bondar school Mustapha Khan with more tact than I should have thought him capable at once begins to flatter the old man Presently we are introduced to what we are given to understand is his daily cross (for he does not lack even this indispensable accessory to spiritual distinction) Mrs Panda Baba an elderly party remarkable neither for wit nor beauty but famous for her powers of ceaseless conversation She begins to talk at once and the Panda hastily brings our interview to a close

November 25 Chimdu unable to persuade police to

take up his case sends appeal to Deputy Commissioner and announces his intention to sue Julan for a hundred rupees

November 26 Julan declares that if Chimdu sends him to jail then when he gets out he will buy thirty rupees worth of food and liquor eat and drink it all murder him after dinner and hang with a contented heart. Think it time to intervene in dispute and after much persuasion Chimdu says he will accept Rs 80 in compensation Julan offers Rs 15

November 27 After smoking innumerable cigarettes and sitting for most of morning in Ashram Chimdu comes down to Rs 60 while Panda Baba with just that blend of push and deference that a B shop might employ to extract a grant from a Provincial Governor persuades Julan to offer Rs 18

November 28 Further negotiations in the course of which Chimdu comes down to Rs 40 and Julan rises to Rs 24

November 30 Final settlement when both parties agree on Rs 30 and this sum is sadly and solemnly produced by Julan (who as a matter of fact is very lucky to get off so cheaply) and pocketed by Chimdu (who is lucky to get anything at all) and the two sign papers never again to trouble the peace of the village

December 5 Open school at Bondar queer little mud building but in glorious site Greeted by inhabitants with every token of enthusiasm guns are fired coconuts offered garlands flung about our necks and the villagers dance all night. This being our first experience of the kind feel it our duty to watch proceedings throughout, urging on dancers with cries of joy and approbation Do not go to bed at all

December 6 Regret this all day

December 12 Wander interminably in secluded, but lovely, valley of the Thadar, in search of site for second branch Ashram Finally, discover pretty little hill in village called Kotri, and decide to build here, in spite of efforts of elderly Die hard who recites long list of other villages where education is more urgently needed.

December 15 News from Bondar that nineteen little Gonds are coming to school Encouraged by this to set out yet again this time in direction of Narbada River Ancient village landlord rather like decayed milestone overgrown with moss offers us bit of land but does not allow us to sleep in his house for fear it will be ceremonially defiled and directs us instead to bug infested shed

December 17 Landlord sends message that after all sahib cannot have land as he may never give it back Great difficulty in persuading girls to come to school as it is feared that education will spoil their value in the marriage market After all the power to send and receive letters widens enormously a girl's powers of intrigue Mustapha Khan reports that he is being persecuted because he is a Mussalman but on inquiry find that everyone likes him very well

December 23 Postman brings enormous sack which as it has had to be carried well over a hundred miles on foot has been delayed not a little in its progress Parcels from many friends—plum pudding dates almonds and raisins chocolates from mother Cake Scotch shortbread oatmeal biscuits from friends in Bombay Bundle of detective stories copy of Derrick's *Parables* and some more highbrow literature Only one real lapse, when wealthy friend writes, Silver and gold

have I none but such as I have, my blessing and affectionate interest, send I to you' Would like to feel that as Franciscans we could rejoice in this kind of thing but regret to find that my reactions to it are entirely worldly in character

December 24 Chapel adorned with decorations of coloured paper manufactured from advertisements saved up during the past year, with rows of candle-stumps balanced rather drunkenly on bits of wood and with quantities of greenery from forest Few flowers as these have all withered and feel that surviving anæmic looking cabbages will not give a festive air to the occasion

December 27 Garden struggles bravely against frost Decide on strong recommendation of Panda Baba who pooh poohs recent lapse and says everybody does it to give charge of new Kotri School to romantic figure of Tiblu Tiblu belongs to Agaria or blacksmith sub-caste of Gonds who claim to have existed from beginning of world In fact Tiblu s mother assures us theirs was the ploughshare that first broke up the barren soil of the prehistoric hills The caste sacrifices black cocks to Lohar Sur the great black spirit of the smelting kilns but Tiblu has long been a vegetarian and does not take part in the ceremony

December 29 Go with Tiblu and Panda Baba to open new school at Kotri Find a ridiculous little dolls house of a building perched on top of small hill by river Even more enthusiastic welcome than at Bondar, even old Die-hard joining in and inspiriting dance by small boy unfortunately extremely ugly dressed up as a girl with pot of ghee and lighted lamp balanced on

his head accompanied by concert party of two violins and a dozen drums

December 31 Second attempt to open centre on banks of Narbada Wander with Srikant across barren and depressing country till suddenly near village named Harra Tola find really perfect site where sacred river curves round like an embrace enclosing a little hill which descends precipitously to the river in which great white rocks break up the current and in one place produce a little waterfall Run to and fro with loud excited cries Spend middle of day in home of diminutive but friendly Gond and I cook entirely divine omelette—eating it is like some deep spiritual experience Tea less successful but Srikant's chapattis excellent

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this, with hot water bottles, and opportunity to give death bed extracts from her autobiography to admiring crowd quickly effect complete recovery Prestige of Dispensary greatly raised as a result of this incident. Here say the villagers is something like a medicine, a medicine that really works Immediate rush of patients asking for injections *that* injection the one that knocks you flat.

January 5 One of our buffaloes leaves this world of toil to wallow in the vast cool mud bath of eternity Curious feeling during previous night that it was no longer with us. Of course say the villagers on hearing this the spirit of your buffalo came to take leave of you before it went away

January 14 By one of those odd coincidences that make one think that these things really must be meant, no fewer than five lepers in various stages of picturesque decay arrive together and refuse to go away One of them establishes himself and pipe in cow-dung pit, which he says *with* some truth, is the cosiest corner of the Ashram, being both warm and sacred—like an Evangelical tea party

January 16 Go to open Narbada Ashram On way there feel shocks of the great Bihar Earthquake very feeble here *Note the time by our clock* so that later when the time of the shocks is announced in the Press, we can correct it this being the first chance we have *had to set our clocks for several months* *The Narbada* Ashram is to be in charge of Phuggu and his sister Adri both Pankas belonging to the Tiger Sept of their tribe. Pankas not highly esteemed by the Gonds who have a proverb about them that 'A Panka went out to war but he met a frog in the way and ran home again' But Adri and Phuggu at least have no reason to fear *the terrors of the forest for as members of the tiger* family no tiger will hurt them On their part when they hear of any tiger being killed they break all the earthen pots in their house shave their heads and distribute *food in token of mourning Adri has had* adventurous youth disguised as a boy she travelled widely on the tender of an engine with the driver for whom she had an unmortified attachment Her family in the manner *of families stopped her marrying him* Even so disguised now as a purdah Mussalman woman, she tried to run away with him but was caught

Crowds of children come from different villages and *all sleep together in enormous bed of dry grass* Delighted to see little Ganesh who eighteen months ago was completely lame going about in very lively manner encouraged this time by Kartik who tells him to imagine he is a bull *chasing a whole herd* of cows He is so inspired by this uplifting thought *that he runs five miles* without crying

January 17 New gift of trees sour limes and

mangoes arrives and all are planted out in auspicious sites with little roofs to shelter them from frost.

January 18 Feel very pious at the sight of so many lepers in Ashram but remind myself firmly that we are living in the twentieth century and decide that they must be sent home. Shamrao however says why not a leper home? Looking at bank balance I tell him why not and declare passionately that I am as fond of the poor as he is but that it is quite impossible and we decide to start building a leper refuge at Bondar to-*morrow*

January 19 Band of Gond ladies arrives all screaming at once. After considerable time discover what is the matter namely that the widowed and impoverished Mankuar borrowed Rs 20 from her mother in law four years ago and has been paying her back at 33⅓ per cent interest ever since the original sum remaining the same though she has actually paid over Rs 35 Mother in law happens to belong to family which we have constantly befriended and to which we have forgiven several debts Good opportunity therefore to tell Parable of the Two Debtors which is well received by mother in law till she realizes its implications As these dawn upon her she begins to talk at the top of her voice while remaining ladies weep and am struck not for the first time at singular inappropriateness of William Blake's *description* of the Tongue

> The Tongue a little moisture fills, a little food it cloys
> A little sound it utters and its cries are faintly heard

Finally mother in law consents to accept Rs 10 in settlement and gives us in return Mankuar's stamped bond. This is solemnly torn up and Mankuar thumb-marks

another paper undertaking to work for us till the Rs 10 without interest is repaid

January 20 Building of Leper Refuge begun none too soon as an incredibly decayed old leper with six cows called Dadhi Dokera (or the Old Body with a Beard) arrives and lying on the ground covers himself pathetically with hay

January 22 Two bears have a fight in the Retreat House apparently unaware that the Greater Silence is perpetually in force there Appalling noise augmented by Sohori coming home drunk about the same time and beating his wife Curious Gond method of drinking to gulp down entire potion at once idea being not to enjoy the taste but to achieve as quickly as possible the exciting sensation of being drunk

January 27 Cold so intense that I can hardly hold pen Wonder why India is called a tropical country Dying Brahmin friaress arrives in filthy condition and Shamrao bathes her and shaves her hair Shortly afterwards comes epileptic Gond youth Tutta by name of age about twenty five who having his right hand paralysed already has in one of his fits fallen into the fire and burnt his left hand terribly When he arrives the burnt hand is on the verge of gangrene and we send him at once in charge of the fatherly Kartik to hospital at Bilaspur

January 29 Panda Baba tells us an exciting story of ghost who lives in a *semur tree* near village He is a *raksha* name given by Gonds to a man who has died without tasting the delights of love Now he is a black and hairy ghost with a fire burning always within him At night the burning becomes intolerable and he creeps out of his tree and visits the maidens of the village

February 1 Old friaress dies having adopted Shamrao as her son Tutta having previously adopted him as his father Shamrao dutifully prepares her funeral pyre and performs her obsequies

February 2 Set out with Panda Baba and Srikant on tour among the Baigas. Maruti the first cook with whom I have ever been able to remain on speaking terms and half a dozen carriers comes with us Travel ten miles, and sleep at the forest village of Chauradadar Panda Baba points out many objects of interest by the way chiefly the different kinds of dung littering the road this is a tiger s this a bear s Here a deer dashed across the road and here a wild pig sat for rest

February 3 Penetrate as far as Karadih where we find the first Baigas long haired dark almost naked perhaps not too intelligent (at Oxford they would probably get Thirds in History) Sitting round the fire in the evening we ask one old man about his youth

Then it was Sukhiraj the Golden Age he said How we used to eat in those days And then his old face beaming he went on to enumerate at least thirty articles of diet till everybody s mouths were fairly watering

But then he concluded with the coming of the Forest Guards the Kali Yug the Age of Darkness began Now a little millet disease and death—that is all our life We are rather touched by this recital and are just feeling for an appropriate gift when Panda Baba who hates to see money passing as it were out of the family cuts him short and sends him away before we have time to redeem the iniquities of the Kali Yug with a few annas tip.

February 4 Leave the main road to search for villages with the fascinating names of Ludra Taliyapani

another paper undertaking to work for us till the Rs 10, without interest is repaid

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water All the same, he adds, the Baigas are necessary to perform sacrifices. How is that? we ask Because they belong to the Earth When the first Baiga was born, Mother Earth was glad and promised that whatever his hands touched should prosper They live so near the Earth that she loves them and tells them all her secrets

February 6 Another long and exhausting journey right into Baiga Chowk, a reservation where the Baigas are still allowed to practise Bewar, a form of cultivation achieved by cutting down forest burning it, and sowing seeds in ashes This saves them from lacerating the breast of their Mother the Earth with the plough It also saves them a great deal of energy in the expenditure of which they are not prodigal In the evening we reach the village of Silpiri

February 7 Thrilling day at Silpiri Everyone very friendly More information for projected thesis Gond members of our party very scornful of Baigas' haphazard methods of worship 'They call up the spirits any how says Panda Baba who is a rigid ceremonialist.

Have long wanted to write to Mahatma Gandhi and tell him that I have met someone who has never heard of him. Here at least I will find someone. But no, everyone knows the name at least, even though one dear old man thinks that it is something to eat—but at last they point out an old woman sitting by the fire in a corner She has never heard of him' Splendid, think I now I can write that letter and it will do the Mahatma no end of good 'But,' they continue, 'she has been stone-deaf for twenty years.'

In afternoon admirable display of dancing I take many photos, and Srikant writes down the songs, all of

Chakmaktola, and Pakaripani By nightfall have not arrived at one of them in spite of traversing innumerable mountain ranges, forests and watercourses. Panda Baba, however, finds his disciples in every village (feel as if I were touring with revivalist preacher in one of the more superstitious American States) and these with much reverence direct us on our way Finally at what seems about midnight reach Ludra Taliyapani and are given astonishing welcome by inhabitants wilder, fiercer, but more handsome than the Baigas of what you might call civilization Huge fires are lit string beds and little seats are placed in village guest house (small but constructed of straw and leaves) and after all the inhabitants have gazed their fill we are allowed to go to sleep

February 5 Spend enchanting day at Taliyapani which dawn reveals as tiny hamlet on sunlit rocky slopes of a tall hill overlooking a sea of hills and forest Very intelligent Baiga (Second in Mathematics?) named Hothu provides us with stream of information about his tribe and—like everyone else who has ever talked to an Indian villager I decide to write thesis on the subject The Baigas Hothu tells me were created immediately after the beginning of the world Born of serpents he adds a little defiantly Naked But God saw them and offered them a piece of cloth nine yards long They tore off a yard but gave the rest back What was the need of it? Since then they do not wash or dress puts in Panda Baba officiously Ask Panda why he is so down on the Baigas Leans towards me and in amused and confidential tone like that of an Archdeacon unbending after his third glass of port explains that it is because they clean themselves with leaves and not with

Gulu Pardhan, famous Don Juan who must have infected many girls with the disease and who, even now, in spite of his disfigurement, has a sort of kingly dignity and splendour about him, his assistant wife, Phulmat, a most beautiful girl who looks after him devotedly—his senior wife has not caught the disease and stays at home to look after the family affairs Dadhi Dokera the old man who is literally falling to pieces, Raja Ram a very handsome young Gond who has lost both his toes and fingers the son of Mrs Panda Baba by *a former husband*, and Gamira another very charming and handsome Gond who *so* far only has the preliminary signs of leprosy

February 14 Tutta returns from Bilaspur, his life having been saved by a miracle of care and kindness by the Government doctor there Even his arm has been saved one finger only had to be amputated Tutta gives us exciting account of his adventures in civilization After being discharged from hospital he was given his fare and sent to the station As he reached the platform, he saw the train steaming out of the station So he ran after it He ran along the line for several miles till he came to another station There he lay down and went to sleep to be awakened by another train going by So once more he jumped up and chased it along the line At the third station, a kindly station master explained the situation to him, gave him some food and when a train did arrive put him into it.

Tutta now almost entirely helpless and has to be fed and washed and put to bed though he can walk about and eat his [illegible] eats magnifice[illegible] here is a sole[illegible] he

which turn out to be entirely proper and with not a little poetry in them Baiga girls perhaps a little hoydenish the Gonds might produce a Tess the Baigas would hardly rise above an Audrey

February 8 Reach Dharkata but there is wine-shop here and village celebrates our arrival by getting heavily drunk Panda Baba however enlivens our evening with account of Creation of World which though differing in many respects from the Inspired Record of Genesis at least avoids the Errors of Charles Darwin and Mr H G Wells

February 9 Attempt to make the thirty five miles between ourselves and Karanjia in a single day Rise very early while ground is still wet with frost Rub vaseline on soles of feet which have become cracked Going barefoot as usual feet are observed to shine as they tread on frosty ground Look' whispers Panda Baba to the others 'though there is frost his feet are shining with sweat Surely this is some Incarnation" By evening have come twenty nine miles and strain of using only such language as might be considered suitable to an Incarnation almost intolerable Take shelter in tumbledown village hut but too tired to eat

February 10 Short journey of six miles and reach home in great content to find—somewhat to my surprise and mortification—that everything has gone on perfectly in my absence Find new policeman established a blend of Dogberry and Mr Grummer short black, with a squint that makes us feel that he is able to keep an eye on all of us at once Says he has been told that I am a thorough gentleman and that he expects me to be his father in both word and deed

February 12 Open Leper Refuge with five lepers—

extracts which would normally be passed over in silence.

March 9 Special dance in honour of Wilfrid who sits on Ashram roof in order to obtain better view My own appreciation of first-class entertainment somewhat marred by fear that at any moment he may fall through.

March 10 We all go to the Narbada Ashram where Wilfrid now thoroughly tribalized sleeps on ground and departs next morning after providing us with the first flavour of intellectual conversation that we have had for months In return we forget to give him bottle of drinking water for journey

March 15 Visited by Excise Officer with strong views on Ayurvedic medicine He is sorry that we are not doing anything of practical value for the Gonds and after visiting dispensary declares that we are actually doing them harm But when he sees sacred *tulsi* plant growing in Ashram he is more reconciled Your work is after all truly religious Find conversation as with so many persons of this kind extremely difficult since—like Castlereagh and the village pump—it is their custom not to converse but to carry on agitated monologue

> And coolly spout and spout and spout away
> In one weak washy everlasting flood.

March 16 Letter from affable Mussalman addressed flatteringly to Verrier Unwin Servant of God Karanjia and offering himself and so far nine children to the service of the Ashram. Concludes by saying that if we could send *him a few Live Tigers or Leopards for sale* he could get us a lot of money for them in Calcutta.

March 18 Less friendly Mussalman landlord of Bhimkundi exquisite village on banks of Narbada where the mighty Bhimsen *once* sat on the ground in front of

points to the lowest button of what you might call his waistcoat. This is then undone, the lapels of the coat flying apart with a brisk noise, and he continues with renewed energy and more ample accommodation.

February 17. Missionary, apparently of type described in Census Report as 'minor and unspecified Protestant', who knows family, visits Ashram, but am out. Remarks to Shamrao, 'What a grief it must be to a wonderful woman like Mrs Elwin to have a son like that.' Should like to have had this curious remark elucidated, but Shamrao clearly anxious to have it preserved in as unpleasant a form as possible.

February 19. Shamrao assaulted by constable, who strikes him on face in bazaar. Spend most of day persuading indignant villagers not to go and beat up police station. Many villagers fast, and some of more attractive ladies (to my secret annoyance) go so far as to weep loudly. Institute new rite for members—Kissing the Sacred Cheek on spot where hand of Oppression has struck it. Village ladies strictly banned from this ceremony as we do not wish to spread ritualistic practices among Gonds.

February 25. Festival of Holi. More beating and assault, this time by women who wander about in bands attacking every man they meet till he buys them off with present of rice, wine or money. Tutta gets very drunk. When I ask him if he is drunk, he says 'Yes' and nods his head with infinite complacency.

March 6. Sudden arrival of Wilfrid David, author of successful novel *Monsoon*. Cook excels himself in producing new and astonishing dishes under impression that visitor is a person of vast wealth. Wilfrid produces *Texts and Pretexts*, and reads in loud voice just those

a greater zest and there were ninety nine cases last year, and a hundred and twenty five the year before Divorces are not listed for obvious reasons

April 10 Heat settles down on us like a monstrous blanket Vague hope that owing to the Second Law of Thermodynamics earth will gradually get cooler but fear that this will be postponed too long to be of any practical advantage to us personally Police confiscate sixty books recently sent us by enthusiastic friend which we had not read and did not want but refuse my offer of a large quantity of second rate theological works which are consigned to the bonfire instead to the great horror of villagers After all they say a book is a book and they rescue several from the flames Delightful sight of ancient Gond dowager carrying off slightly charred copy of *For Sinners Only* in triumph to her house where it will probably be worshipped as a household god

April 13 Three visitors from Christa Seva Sangha Ashram in Poona formerly inhabited by ourselves Take them and all our workers to Kapildara Do not pass beneath the Falls as usual having previously proved them inaccurate and misleading but bathe instead lower down river in the Falls of Milk whose waters—according to Panda Baba—wash away all sin In fact the Ganges herself in the form of a coal black cow must come once a year to bathe in these healing waters Perhaps naturally long discussion in evening on nature of sin not unlike Group Meeting but notice everything kept carefully on academic plane and nobody gives himself away General agreement that the Worst Sin is to kill a cow though Mustapha Khan disagrees with this and says in rather a Gandhish voice that it is much worse to betray truth The eye observes Sohoti is the real

the Sacred River as she was fleeing away from the mountains towards the sea and dared her to pass him. But she turned herself into the fish Bhami that looks like a snake and went underground coming up again a few miles farther on   Where was I? Less affable Mussalman landlord refuses to let us open school in this enchanted spot We send a deputation of four of our local Mussalmans to reason with him but when they arrive it is found that they all belong to different sects among the followers of the Prophet and what was to have been a peaceful discussion about land turns into an acrimonious theological dispute about the interpretation of history and the correct reading of the Koran All chance of getting our bit of land lost by trying to be too clever

March 20 However Gond landlord at Barnai two miles from Bhimkundi offers us land for school Barnai neither healthy nor beautiful—all water brought from feeble stream used by inhabitants as public lavatory—but excellent centre for children Shamrao goes and chooses site and on return to Ashram is bitten by scorpion Panda Baba however relieves him of pain in miraculously short time by holding foot in hand and muttering incantations over it

March 27 Find some curious statistics not interesting but curious about our District's record of crime which does not seem so flourishing as it might be In the whole of last year there were only nine convictions for Rioting and Unlawful Assembly fifteen for Offences Affecting Human Life eleven for Grievous Hurt twenty seven for *Cattle Theft* six for *Bad Livelihood* one under the Opium Act and four under the Excise Act *Housebreaking and Theft however were practised with*

to an end leaves us with Brother Tom C.S.S who has had quite enough. Tom separated from Srikant, gets lost in the dark in the jungle on his twenty five mile trip down to the railway Meets motor on road and stops it only to discover that it contains no less a personage than Her Highness the Maharani of Rewa (the State that borders our district and through which we have to pass in order to reach the railway) But the White Skin can do anything Tom is not shot without warning but is taken to the Maharani's camp given hot bath excellent dinner (soup fish chicken and two veg sweet and savoury) and lots of cigarettes Search party even dispatched to find Srikant who is eventually rescued and both proceed refreshed on their way next morning

April 27 Visit of Deputy Superintendent of Police Very friendly and amusing but confiscates our copies of Fisher's *Strange Little Brown Man Gandhi* and Mazoomdar's *Gandhi Versus the Empire* both given me by the authors and containing references to self hence prized but apparently proscribed

A new leper comes to the Refuge a *sadhu* an engaging little man who meditates standing on his head or sometimes while sitting in the top branches of a tree Poor man trembles like a leaf when Shamrao tells *him* what is the matter with him

May 1 Plague of cockroaches Fr Bill Lash C.S.S discovers one perfectly cooked in his rice For some reason eats no more supper Astonishingly beautiful girl diagnosed as leprous bursts into tears on seeing fellow sufferers, and runs away at once.

Tutta very anxious to get married Suitable girl staying at present in dispensary Shamrao busily

sinner; the eye leads the way and all the rest runs after it. Panda Baba advances novel argument against smoking, that it fouls the mouth and that therefore the Smoker's Kiss is less acceptable than others Several of the younger members of the company abjure tobacco on the instant

April 21 Visit Kotri Ashram with Shamrao How ever amateurish our teaching may be, notice that entire atmosphere and discipline of 'Progressive Schools' seem to have been transplanted here Read some where that there are three stages in life of child—romance, precision and generalization All these children in romance stage, when it is an adventure either to pour a cup of tea down the Headmaster's neck or, when I am victim, to lift him high into the air and drop him heavily on the ground Glorious bathes in river, and in evening sit round fire and boys ask riddles 'A little bird goes hopping along, and lays nine hundred eggs as it goes What is that?' asks one of them The answer is a needle Or again, 'The black cow lies sleeping on the ground but the red cow dances in the air That is the fire—the black charred wood lying on the ground while the red flame leaps above it

April 23 Opening of new school at Barnai Large and enthusiastic crowds Villagers dance all night. Next morning sit down to rather scanty meal all that remains after feeding seventy children Suddenly a mighty rushing wind bursts into school covering every thing with bits of wood hay stubble Greatly edified by expression of resignation on faces of C S S visitors as they see this spoiling of their goods

April 25 Srikant, his period of service having come

the first and dirtiest children to come to school The village having decided that these two last relationships should be regularized everyone gathers in the court of one of the village houses Shamrao and I feeling like young brides go down carrying large brass plates on which are placed rice dal salt coconuts and a shirt and dhoti First I sit down in centre of court with Kundru facing me. He also has a dish with rice dal salt and coconut Then the officiating minister (a rather well known magician known as a gunia and a disciple of Panda Baba's) makes a fire in front of us and burns incense in it After this we exchange our dishes three times so that at last Kundru has my gifts and I have his. Then he takes a handful of fresh barley shoots (the Jawara) and hangs them over my ears and I do the same for him. He places a Gond rosary round my neck Then the gunia smashes the coconuts and we place a little bit of the coconut in each other's mouths and embrace in the Gond fashion From this day onwards we must never address one another by name and we must support and help one another for the rest of our lives. Then Shamrao and Suddhu are done and after that we distribute sweets and coconut and everyone becomes very jolly

Later villagers come to the Ashram and dance all night.

May 9 C.S.S. friends, after being awake all night with the dance leave us at 3.30 in the morning Long delay while horses and men are got ready and Christian charity strained to the utmost while we all dropping with fatigue wait to say good bye to one another But at last visitors depart and we retire to bed Christian charity returning like a flood as we put out the lights.

negotiating Acute tension all day but citadel shows no signs of falling Towards evening, Tutta comes to me and in a hoarse and confidential whisper says he thinks that if Panda Baba were to sacrifice a black cock, it might just turn the scale Would I use my influence with the old man to take up his case? Suggest that as I also am a Panda (priest) I might add my poor prayers to those of the Chief Magician Tutta looks sceptical but too polite to say what he obviously thinks At least, he continues would I go so far as to make Panda Baba place a blest coconut under the lady's bed?

May 9 Gonds very romantic people Gond society is bound together by various kinds of friendships each with its proper name These are much more enduring than their marriages. There is the *Bajh* at the bottom of the scale then the *Sakhi* (the soul mate) the *Jawara* (a David and Jonathan type of friendship) the *Maha prasad* and the *Gangajal* (unique and lifelong friends) the *Amarbel* (name of a clinging creeper the love I suppose that will not let you go) the *Gulabphul* or Flower of the Rose a little sentimental the *Kelapan* or Leaf of the Plantain the *Narbadajal* the Waters of the Sacred River and so on We have many of these friends Shamrao has a *Bajh* in an incredibly ugly little boy who sticks out behind and a *Gulabphul* in Amir fat and smiling as an apple-dumpling My own *Gulabphul* is a little girl who might have stepped straight out of a story by Beatrix Potter and I have three *Jawaras*—the tiny Jiggery (another little girl I m sorry to say but at least a very ugly one) a glorious boy at Kotri and Kundru one of our own villagers Sham rao also has a *Jawara* in the village Suddhu the father of tiny Ranger with the big stomach who was one of

tions This no doubt very good for them but sight of them running on deformed feet reminds one of medieval paintings of dance of death Ronald with a sinister and modernist look in his eye informs me that if the leper kissed by St Francis was (as is most probable) an N case there was no danger as this type not contagious St Francis however would not have known this so act equally meritorious.

May 16 All school-children dosed with chenopodium a rite which is attended by even more tears than the annual ceremony of vaccination What we had previously attributed to enlarged spleen says Millicent is really due to round worm Ronald and Millicent always so practical devise spoon which can be held by Tutta and he will now be able to feed himself thus saving us a full hour a day

May 18 Arrival of District Village Uplift Committee consisting of Deputy Commissioner Revenue Officer and two assistants Agricultural Expert Veterinary Surgeon Medical Officer Circle Inspector of Police a Lawyer and several others to hold Uplift Rally Their coming heralded by police invading our village and beating peasant to force him to prepare comforts for Uplift Committee members One whole manure pit is dug and a bull castrated as a demonstration In evening meeting addressed by various members of Uplift Committee now well fed with food taken free of charge from half starving villagers. Agricultural expert tells villagers that they must have good soil good manure and good water if they want good crops Delightful and rather coarse speech by bearded Mussalman veterinary surgeon who states—most mendaciously—that the cow is his mother Other speakers urge

May 10 Prolonged visit from legal friend orthodox Hindu who has never tasted an onion, an egg or a cup of coffee Takes his meals separately Disbelieves in medicine For asthma recommends four ounces of cow's urine drunk fresh and hot for spleen a mixture of urine and jungle fruit 'No real cure for asthma' says Shamrao 'has ever been discovered' 'That' says Our Lawyer heavily and impressively is because the West has not yet awakened to the curative properties of cow's urine'

Young villager brought to Ashram with barbed fishing spear driven deep into his foot Impossible to remove it without operation Persuade his friends to take him to Pendra but on the way they meet the Maharani of Rewa who is still living in the forest like a fairy godmother and her doctor operates and saves the foot

May 12 Ronald and Millicent Freeman who seem to know everything in world about leprosy come to stay with us Tutta's intended natural and supernatural persuasion alike futile definitely says No Receive news that gang of eighty dacoits are hiding in forest to attack us Youngest member of Ashram Sundar aged sixteen posts guards of villagers all over the hill and himself retires to bed with two guns two spears a bow and poisoned arrows four axes a squirt and a bottle of pure carbolic acid Fortunately for them dacoits fail to put in an appearance

May 14 Millicent who for years has worked in great leper home in Purulia visits our little Refuge and gives expert and invaluable help She makes all lepers with exception of sadhu who stands on his head run round the compound three times after their injec

attractive old woman with no possible claim upon him, day by day? I doubt it.

Jamnalalji sends us a beautiful little horse—its name Anand—with a white star on its forehead

June 15 Take all our workers for ten days educational tour to Calcutta. Three of them, Sukli and Nanas both Gonds and Tiblu the Agaria have never been in a train before All are quite unfamiliar with city life Tremendous excitement in anticipation of seeing their first tunnel, their first tram their first aeroplane

On getting into Calcutta Mail at Bilaspur, find entire third-class compartment occupied by prosperous-looking Gujaratis who have spread their beds and baggage so as to leave only standing room for everyone else Scene of great violence follows in which Shamrao brandishing copy of *Brave New World*, proprietor of railway hotel and unspecified and dingy Mussalman, lead attack on Gujaratis as oppressors of the poor Skirmishing continues for three hours while gradually most of our party are pushed not only into sitting-space but even get room to sleep At last only Shamrao and self remain sitting up I read D H Lawrence's *Virgin and the Gipsy* by bad light with head of railway coolie (to whom I have never been formally introduced) snoring in my lap At midnight Gujaratis discover who we really are Immediate and electric change of atmosphere. Two comfortable sleeping spaces immediately placed at our disposal their rightful possessors expressing their preference for keeping awake all night, and in morning they present us with bank-note for no less than Rs 50

Sudden irruption into twentieth century on arrival

villagers to clean their houses (Gond houses are always spotlessly clean) to use mosquito nets and not to burn cow-dung (stock clichés of village uplift—forest people with ready access to wood do not usually burn manure though they waste it) After a visit of eighteen hours, District Village Uplift Committee departs and villagers have been enjoying fuller and richer life ever since

May 20 Our friends the Pochas celebrated Seed Merchants of Poona send us large box of seeds for the rains. There are packets of tomato cabbage (we can never get away from it) brinjal lettuce beans peas beetroot radish and pumpkin bags of maize and for flowers—zinnia balsam periwinkle daisies cosmos sun flowers and gaillardia—the only flowers that can stand *up under our heavy rains*

May 22 Open school at village called Ryatwar a large mud building in shade of great wood three miles from Karanjia Villagers dance all night but by now have learnt technique of retiring unobtrusively to some one's house in remote corner of village and going to sleep Return at dawn to scene of revelry and find Panda Baba *inspired apparently by some local belle dancing about like a two-year-old*

May 30 Case of cholera in village Vigorous prophylactic measures

June 1 Cholera patient dies but precautionary measures seem successful as no one else follows example

Old lame woman who has been in Ashram for month under Shamrao's care gets up and walks Reflection on nature of miracles Suppose Shamrao had waved his hands over her and said Arise and walk would that have been a greater miracle than the love and patience which inspired him to massage and care for an un

party Striking example of value of Europeans adopt ing Indian style of living—a policy which otherwise has little to commend it.

June 20 More heat. More mosquitoes Rain Visit cotton mill. Now get cup of tea at breakfast, but feel as though I was permanently in Black Hole Visit New Market quite the best thing in Calcutta The party goes to Bengali drama and I to bed

June 21 Legs break out all over with poisoned sores. Sense of being in hell intensified. Visit Jute Mill Spend middle of day at Ramakrishna Math Belur famous original centre founded by Swami Vivekananda. Astonishing welcome from many quite un known Sannyasis who say that they have been reading me for years. Surely they must be mistaking me for someone else? Magnificent monastic luncheon and talk afterwards with the Prior a grand old man his almost naked body covered with thick black hair con tentedly puffing at his hookah The Ramakrishna Order has evidently succeeded in adapting many of the more attractive features of Western monasticism. We ultimately get into a boat and are rowed down the Ganges to Calcutta. On the way our first aeroplane flies overhead but causes less astonishment than I should have expected

June 22 Three members of party develop measles Universal agreement that civilization is no good. Evi dently no justification for Satish Babu's fear, expressed to us on the day of our arrival that visit to city would unsettle our people and make them want to leave their village So we say good-bye to our kindly hosts to whom we must have been quite unusual burden and make dash for life back to jungle.

at Calcutta very disturbing, though slightly modified by medieval atmosphere of the Harijan Ashram where we go to stay, and where our host is Satish Das Gupta brilliant chemist and great gentleman. Heat, noise and mosquitoes beyond temperate description.

June 18. Rise at 5.45 for prayers after night made sleepless by terroristic efforts of mosquitoes. At 6.0, already feeling faint, go in to breakfast, all agog for a cup of the life-giving tea but am presented instead with a glass of pure cold water. Set out to visit zoo and drink several cups of tea on way and feel slightly better. Shamrao who overslept, and did not get up till 5.55, is in great form. The zoo is immense success, especially the hippopotamus. Obese Bengali in monkey house points to copy of *Thank You, Jeeves* under my arm, and asks militantly 'Is that copy of Holy Bible?' Lose my head and reply wildly 'No, why should it be?' To which he replies 'You look the sort of person who would be carrying Holy Bible.' Returning home, borrow mirror and scrutinize myself long and carefully in mood of deep depression. At night see very appropriate film *Robin Hood* and go to bed just in time to get up for morning prayers. Sham oversleeps again.

June 19. Spend morning at Bengal Chemical Works, midday in Museum, evening at the printing press of the *Anand Bazar Patrika*, where we are given a meal of the most delicious Bengali sweets. See Victoria Memorial, Black Hole, Whiteaway & Laidlaws, the Eden Garden and Dr Kalidas Nag. Escape from party and go for European dinner, of which by now I am badly in need, while Shamrao takes rest for a good Bengali meal. Mortified to discover that my dinner cost just twice as much as total expense of remaining eleven members of

party Striking example of value of Europeans adopting Indian style of living—a policy which otherwise has little to commend it.

June 20 More heat. More mosquitoes Rain Visit cotton mill. Now get cup of tea at breakfast, but feel as though I was permanently in Black Hole Visit New Market, quite the best thing in Calcutta. The party goes to Bengali drama and I to bed.

June 21 Legs break out all over with poisoned sores Sense of being in hell intensified. Visit Jute Mill Spend middle of day at Ramakrishna Math Belur famous original centre founded by Swami Vivekananda Astonishing welcome from many quite unknown Sannyasis who say that they have been reading me for years. Surely they must be mistaking me for someone else? Magnificent monastic luncheon and talk afterwards with the Prior a grand old man his almost naked body covered with thick black hair contentedly puffing at his hookah The Ramakrishna Order has evidently succeeded in adapting many of the more attractive features of Western monasticism. We ultimately get into a boat and are rowed down the Ganges to Calcutta On the way our first aeroplane flies overhead but causes less astonishment than I should have expected.

June 22 Three members of party *develop measles* Universal agreement that civilization is no good. Evidently no justification for Satish Babu's fear expressed to us on the day of our arrival that visit to city would unsettle our people and make them want to leave their village So we say good bye to our kindly hosts to whom we must have been quite unusual burden and make dash for life back to jungle.

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July 18 Dhimar woman evidently dying and anxious to go home and see her children but none of the villagers are willing to carry her as she is of different, though not lower caste

July 19 Dhimar woman dies and have to send to distant village for her caste fellows as no one else will help in funeral

July 20 Hold an exam today in hope of finding some suitable new workers About fifteen people turn up including the Kotwar or Sub-Inspector s jackal and we give them a short written test and a long and un expected viva Our questions were mainly on subjects that had not previously been associated in their minds with education.

> Please S r the Undergraduates sa d
> Turn ng a little blue
> We d d not know that was the sort
> Of thing we had to do

The questions that give us most entertainment are these

(1) Have you educated your own wife and daughters? If not how can you expect to educate other people? (Kotwar answers Certainly not for then they would be able to write love-letters.)

(2) Why do you refuse to eat from the hands of a Mussalman? (We cannot get a single intelligent answer to this question presumably because no intelli gent answer can be given)

(3) Do you want children to stand up when you come into the room and call you Sir? (Of course says the Kotwar that is the way children should behave)

(4) Do you think it is right to beat children? (All but unanimous on this of course it is right)

June 28 Find countryside transformed by a weeks rain and zinnias and cosmos growing wild all over hill while ground near school is a field of marigolds. The walls of our houses are covered with an unsightly mess of straw called *chirra* to protect their mud faces against the rain

July 5 Sow and distribute large quantities of vegetable and flower seeds and transplant dozens of self sown zinnias daisies and marigolds into garden and manure them with cow-dung ash

Agitation in village to put Kartik out of caste since he must have defiled his soul or his palate while travelling to Calcutta Ashram invaded by enormous black scorpion large as a man s hand and hairy

July 6 Squash anti Kartik agitation by saying that no one who takes part in it will ever be employed by us or given loan medicine or any other help

July 8 Crippled woman of *Dhimar or fisherman caste carried here by husband and journey very nearly* kills her The Dhimars are assiduous cultivators of the *singara* nut which in my book is described as having a taste somewhat between a coconut and a potato with a flavour of soap but am unable to imagine what this taste can be In evening beautiful double rain bow across Ashram hill It climbs up out of an ant hill Panda Baba tells me *I have seen it*

July 15 *Tiny Gond boy Pithu comes and says he is going to live with us He is far too irresistible to refuse* Can this be beginning of old dream of a children s hostel?

July 17 Evidently for Pithu spreads news that company and food is good and three boys and a girl come to join him.

July 29 Panda Baba showing a certain domestic restlesness, due no doubt to Mrs Panda's inexhaustible conversational powers. Mrs Panda reminds me of Wordsworth who in his off moments is said to have been like—

> an old half witted sheep
> Which bleats articulate monotony
> And indicates that two and two are three
> That grass is green lakes damp and mounta ns steep

July 30 Rain falling in torrents. Letter from Jail Official in neighbouring district to inquire if we have any young and handsome girls of marriageable age in our Ashram and if so will I kindly inform him at what hours our institution is open for inspection Roses flowering admirably and many seedlings now up and about—tomatoes seem strong and fit while beanstalks climb over houses at prodigious rate

August 1 Cow eats most of young seedlings in school garden As I go to bed a little jungle cat comes into room and begins running to and fro mewing in agitated fashion Both astonished and annoyed at this conduct but cat resists for long time my efforts to turn it out. At last giving me up I suppose as hopeless it goes off Two or three hours later I got out of bed in dark lantern having gone out to drink some water As I put my hand down towards drinking pot hear a rustling noise and hastily retire and light lantern There coiled round pot is gigantic cobra less than three inches from where my feet had been Rather good of the little cat to try to warn me.

August 2 Enormous parcels of khadi cloth are sent in by Parsi friend in Bombay—enough shirtings to clothe a hundred children six carpets', warm Kashmiri

(5) How would you deal with an outbreak of cholera in the village? (I would apply for leave says the Kotwar and get away as soon as possible)

(6) Which do you regard as the greatest sin among the following?—

Killing a cow
Failing to educate your daughters
Adultery inside the tribe
Not helping a dying woman of another tribe
Telling lies
Taking forced and unpaid labour from the poor

The unanimous answer to this question is To Kill a Cow and the Kotwar rather patronizingly points out that to commit adultery inside the tribe—*provided* that you are not found out—is not a sin at all so why ask such silly questions?

Only one candidate passes though we have our doubts about the Kotwar who would undoubtedly add to the zest of our days All the others go away and become our enemies for life convinced that their candidatures have been defeated by sharp practice

July 24 Hostel now established and includes two other little girls who might have stepped straight out of *Alice* the black faced bright-eyed Hazari the little frog Sepaya Rannu the mouse the plump Rattan and Dholi the mugger with big teeth

July 25 Parcel of medicines from Bombay friend who has collected them by going round the Drug Market and extracting them one by one from the merchants there—a heroic proceeding Very useful collection but includes two dozen rolls of lint too old to be of any medical value and Shamrao has them made into warm vests for babies.

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namdas blankets towels shirts dhotis caps and even waistcoats All carefully stored away against cold weather Hostel children doing well pleasant sight of long row of faces peeping out of huge corporate bed as Sohori plays to them on bamboo flute

August 3 Clear out hornet s nest by simple but barbarous method of throwing boiling water at it Hundreds of hornets appear from nowhere and brisk engagement follows from which Ashram members ulti mately emerge victorious though heavily outmatched both in numbers and in weapons of offence

August 4 Sunflower seedlings all perish from some unknown disease probably damping off On other hand a rather depressed looking plant whose species we had been unable to diagnose suddenly produces a magnificent white lily Balsam periwinkles marigolds and zinnias coming on well A sort of cucumber forms an excellent addition to our diet

August 8 Epidemic of smallpox at Harra Tola and Barnai Gond children who have been vaccinated escape more or less but Hindu children whose parents have religious objections suffer badly Two exquisite children of Lamana or Gipsy tribe whose parents bribed the vaccinator with a rupee not to do them get it violently and the girl goes partially blind for a time

August 14 Exciting snake hunt in morning See ing a big snake sunning itself in front of Ashram I call Panda Baba and presently he and Shamrao and several others come armed with sticks and axes By this time the snake has gone to ground behind the cane screen that protects our walls from rain but after long search we drive it out The screen is now pulled away from the wall forming a barrier which divides the

hunters into two parties. Snake puts up a fine fight. First of all dashes out to attack me. I don't see it but Shamrao shouts at me and when it is about a foot away I drive it back. Then it dives under the screen towards Panda Baba and we all hold our breath wondering if it will catch him unawares. But the old man is wonderfully agile the snake is right on top of him when up goes his stick into the air and with a single blow he kills it breaking its back. A fine long creature and very poisonous.

August 16. Parcel of dozen sour lime trees and six mangoes comes from Pochas, and are planted in Ashram and in Leper Refuge at Bondar. Notice in some book that bone-manure is very valuable. Country side littered with bony looking bones and try to get villagers to collect them. But this apparently contrary to Gond philosophy of conduct for one and all refuse to touch a bone and we have to wait till an 'untouchable' Chamar or leather worker comes to Ashram and collects and crushes them. Rain falls with indescribable ferocity.

August 20. Fat green caterpillars like Leigh Hunt's fish, legless, unloving, infamously chaste, attack flowers and tomatoes with disgustingly healthy appetites.

August 21. Old man, our first syphilitic patient who lived for a time in the chapel, bitten by cobra.

August 22. Old friend dies.

August 24. Sensation of month is Panda Baba's decision to drive Mrs Panda out of house and instal in her place a young but even uglier bride decidedly I regret to say steatopygous. Her Posterior say the children, always so regrettably outspoken on these matters, must weigh fully twenty pounds. Can only

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October 17 Box of new seeds comes for winter planting Many delicious and gaily-coloured packets of sweet peas poppies carnations hyacinth mignonette clarkias sweet william snapdragon forget me not and asters. Enlarge my garden to receive these distinguished new-comers.

October 18 Sow seeds a solemn function which seems somehow incomplete without having Panda Baba to sacrifice a black cock.

October 19 Shamrao who has shared my hut for the last two years, now declares that I am obliterating his personality and that he must have a home of his own in order to find fuller self-expression Starts transforming part of Dispensary into *dwelling* house but goes so far as to concede that there shall be a passage from his house to mine. Make this an excuse for once more pulling down my *own* house and rebuilding it at cost of four or five rupees, and Ashram becomes more like a rabbit warren than ever

October 20 Our company of workers now really representative There are Christians Hindus, a Brahmin a Mussalman Gonds polygamists *henogamists* monogamists celibates polytheists, henotheists monotheists theists, animists pantheists monists vegetarians, egg-eaters rat-eaters beef-eaters and those to whom even the dung of *the* cow is sacred bacon-eaters and those to whom even the smell of the pig is anathema all united How nice it is!

> I am akin to all the Earth
> by many a tribal sign
> The aged pig will often wear
> that sad sweet smile of mine

hope that like the lady in Boswell, this will turn out to be a bottom of good sense

August 29 My birthday celebrated in spite of feeling that I am a little old for it Parcel of detective stories from friend in England comes at just right moment and decide to take day off reading Agatha Christie though painfully aware that it would be more suitable for me to employ my leisure reciting the Penitential Psalms In evening customary ceremonies have to be endured I am garlanded offered coconuts and fed Dinner party of all workers and fifty children and several gate-crashers notably an old gentleman who more than earns his meal by giving spirited imitations of cats dogs parrots and human beings in nearly (but fortunately not all) their various attitudes After dinner highly amusing but perhaps somewhat coarse entertainment (in which the mirror is held up to every possible aspect of nature) by party of Pankas with usual small boy this time thanks be appropriately beautiful dressed up as a dancing girl and actors who play parts of *sadhus* beggars police and moneylenders to great delight of all present

September 7 Life has become really dark dumpish and sowre to use admirable words of Herbert Even garden now blaze of colour cannot dispel gloom Rain comes through roof but carefully avoids wetting any part of room except my bed

October 15 Gsilu the Leper dies fighting for life to the last His death apparently hastened by his relatives who make him swallow a rupee a strange sacrament sometimes administered *in extremis* In his place comes an adorable child Gendu youngest son of old Kapi

State sani e allegri,
senza troppo caldo,
senza patire della pioggia,
senza zanzare,
senza colera e malaria
e altre malattie,
senza funzionari noiosi
e altre persone moleste
Senza scrupoli e malinconie,
in pace, libertà e fortezza

May you be fit and cheerful,
Free from excessive heat,
Free from the pouring rain,
Free from gnats,
Free from cholera and malaria
And other diseases,
Free from troublesome officials
And other tiresome persons.
Without doubts or sadness,
In peace, freedom and strength

October 27 Our prestige rises considerably since a friend has started sending us copies of a famous London Weekly, the villagers believing that the figure of Mr Punch is the Christian version of one of the less reputable Hindu deities.

October 29 This week's mail from Europe seems intended to make me realize how unspiritual I have become. 'We have read your circular letter,' writes one. 'We can only pray for your soul.' Another begs me not to lay so much stress on the physical aspect of things: consider the lilies, she says. A third regrets that the Christian side (as if there were any other) of our work is so lacking, and stresses the value of prayer-meetings.

November 5 Prolonged quarrel between Panda

To celebrate this, we decide to have a dinner We can all eat together, provided that (a) the different castes sit slightly apart—thus Phuggu and Adri are to sit together on one mat, the Christians with the Mussalman and Tiblu *who has been excommunicated for adultery outside the tribe are to sit on another*, the Brahmin on another and so on, and (b) our food is cooked by our cowherd Sohori whose hands, from daily familiarity with the sacred udders of the cow, are considered holy Consult Adri about the menu, she being a woman 'Chicken pulao,' she says at once, for the Pankas are greatly attached to this delicacy At immense pains the food is prepared I make some uplifting remarks The stage is cleared for dinner, we sit on our separate mats, great green plantain leaves are spread before us, Sohori brings in the food with his sacred hands, careful *not even to brush against anyone on the way*—and *then, Mustapha Khan cannot eat it because the chicken was not killed in the sacred name of Allah*, Tiblu *cannot eat it because it was a black chicken and the Agarias offer black chickens to the Great Black Spirit* of the iron kilns Nanas cannot eat it because the Raj Gonds never eat animals *with only two legs, though they take freely of those with four* our Brahmin cannot eat it because his section of Brahmins is vegetarian, Shamrao cannot eat it because he is trying to be a Gandhi man, and I cannot eat it because I have indigestion So the two Pankas tuck their heads down and get on with a banquet meant for eight, while we peck about among the vegetables

October 23 Italian Sister sends unusually appropriate blessing which I must put down in both Italian and English.

State sani e allegri,
senza troppo caldo,
senza patire della pioggia,
senza zanzare,
senza colera e malaria
e altre malattie,
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Baba and ex wife on our cutting her maintenance money from his stipend She threatens to report him to Sub-Inspector of Police Had her complaint been a scorpion bite (for which it may be remembered Pliny's prescription was to go and whisper the trouble in the ear of an ass) I should not have dissuaded her

Sweet peas asters geraniums and carnations make their first acquaintance with the inhospitable climate of Karanjia rather in the manner of the ladies in Saki who had the air of having bowed to destiny but were uncertain whether the salute would be returned

November 6 Take solitary walk to Bondar and as usual find mental processes powerfully accelerated by this exercise Discover young and indescribably hand some young leper Raja Ram to be developing a septic foot On way home think so hard that several vil lagers come out of their houses supposing strange buzz ing noise to be passing motor-car Decide (*a*) that leper refuge must be transported from Bondar to Karanjia so that we can look after patients properly and (*b*) that Raja Ram must be taken without delay to hospital

November 7 Spend most of day arguing with Sham rao about these two plans Suggest that I take Raja Ram to hospital myself knowing this self-sacrificing offer certain to be rejected Finally he consents to take all lepers and ex wife of Panda Baba who is mother of Raja Ram by an ex husband to big leper hospital some hundred miles distant

November 8 Rat eats nearly all sweet peas and half the asters.

November 10 Rat opens tin of cheese straws sent by mother for my birthday and apparently disliking

taste, places bits of them in every conceivable nook and corner of store-room, including each separate shelf of cupboard. It then goes into garden for spot of sweet william dashes back to store-room for a bite of old blanket, and ends up with savoury strip from cover of Sir Thomas Browne's *Hydriotaphia*

November 12 Long letter from Mahatma Gandhi urging me to perform daily yogna, or sacrifice, of spinning As spinning is chiefly valuable as a means of identification that is of doing the same thing that poor people do and as no one here for hundreds of miles has ever seen a spinning wheel, decide not to, but suggest rice-pounding as daily sacrifice instead. Village boy makes rice-pounder and instals it in corner of refectory Formidable wooden instrument, but apparently quite simple you raise one end by treading on the other and drop it (not your end but the other) into a hole filled with unhusked rice, then you raise it again and drop it again and raise it again and drop it again, the husks fly off and there you are Just like Brother Juniper's see-saw Watch village women performing this simple feat with efficiency and speed.

Ashram as usual cluttered up with living organisms, fifteen adults a dozen children, forty hens two cocks, Anand the horse dozens of rats, and two dogs called respectively Bunter Sahib and Chumpie Bai, both names, incredible to say genuine Chhattisgarhi Hindi words Joined today by third dog a lady, evidently in search of self-expression Violent quarrel follows between Bunter Sahib and Mrs Chumpie, presumably on account of this Jumping Joan's invasion of their domestic felicity Reflect on expressiveness of the Chhattisgarhi dialect. The word pronounced 'tunch'

for example means that you have had your Ovaltine and no longer suffer from night starvation The expression 'bunny bunny' means much the same. 'How are you this morning?' you ask 'Bunny bunny, thank you all the same I have been very tunch ever since I took my morning drink of illicitly-distilled liquor' And a word pronounced pitch-cart means expressively fuss and botheration, while 'cuss-cuss admirably describes your sensations of the morning after

November 14 First lesson in rice-pounding Like the Apostle's Creed there is more in this than meets the eye First you have to clean the rice by throwing it up and down in the air and catching it until all the bits of mud and stone wood hay stubble have been bounced out of it After half an hour of this you put the greatly attenuated remainder into hole and begin manipulating pounder Even this not purely physical as you have to aim at hole After forty minutes of this, during which bits of rice seem to have been scattered in all directions you have to separate the rice from the husks by again tossing in air till gentle breeze has blown the chaff away Finally a tiny handful of rice is all that remains after labour of hour and half

November 15 Privileged to listen in to very impressive quarrel between two old soaks of village and add to my vocabulary two nouns and an adjective of which even the English equivalents were previously unknown to me My collection of Gond swear words (here as everywhere the surest index to a people's character) now almost complete my one sorrow being that it would hardly do for me to use them on the many occasions where their use seems plainly indicated Interested to note that English word hippopotamus im

ported into Gond country by our workers after their visit to Calcutta Zoo has become naturalized as a term of abuse and that there is apparently no greater insult than to call a man a Christian The less obscene part of tonight's row may therefore be translated—and Chhattisgarhi can only really be rendered by Eliza bethanisms

JULAN You sodden headed sheep's-face! You issue of a mangy dog!

CHAITHER Death and eternal tortures! You skew eyed carrion! You tedious rogue!

JULAN You lowtish dolt! You hippopotamus!

CHAITHER You brainsick fool! You—you—you son of a Christian dog!

(Loud cries and belabouring noises off)

November 16 Clarkias cornflowers and annual chrysanthemums coming on well Large sunflower bursts suddenly and gloriously into bloom in garden In evening we all go over to open the Thakkur Ashram at Birbaspur Find customary mud building con structed by Panda Baba on top of hill encircled by river a field of yellow oil-seed below it and wide ex panse of hill forest and meadow all around. Very charming children here should have no difficulty in incorporating themselves with the beautiful and per manent forms of nature. Effect of this uplifting thought tempered somewhat by small girl being violently sick in lap Great welcome from villagers who dance all night. Find myself as always, slowly changing from Cavalier to Puritan as the night wears on By the time we have found corner of ice-cold veranda on which to snatch few moments sleep have turned into veritable Histriomastix

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own master deepened by summons to come and save life of local witch—crisis which would normally be handled by Shamrao. This is Mrs Chimdu, mother of little lame Ganesh whom Shamrao taught to walk, who some time ago—it is alleged—enchanted and killed Julan's little son. Recently Chimdu ran away with very beautiful girl, now reported ailing, and some local Matthew Hopkins has decided that this is due to Mrs Chimdu's magic. Going down to village, am uncertain whether to adopt view of William of Paris that since it is proved that witches eat children they must be regarded as heretics and kept in order, or to stand firmly in tradition of Jean de Meung and Roger Bacon and say the whole thing is bosh. Find Mrs C. very much beblubbered in the headman's house, her voice sounding like the clapper of a great bell in the ears of one and all. Scream at top of my voice what are meant to be conciliatory remarks until everyone promises that Mrs C. will not be sewn up in sack and thrown in pond, nor will her head be shaved in form of cross, nor will she be beaten with castor-oil plant, nor even will all her teeth be knocked out, but that in fact she will be unmolested. Depart, declaring roundly that whoever is enemy of Mrs C. is my enemy, and that I look on all her children as my own. On way home, affected with sudden fear lest these expressions of generous chivalry may be misconstrued.

November 29. Busy re-building leper refuge on hill neighbouring, but properly segregated from, the Ashram. Panda Baba does this kind of thing with great efficiency and soon delightful compound comes into being, with trees and swing in centre and garden laid out and planted with sweet-peas, clarkias and cornflowers.

inveighing bitterly against the concupiscence of jigs and dances. Discover young, beautiful and literate Gond girl, Sugga, who everyone decides is Just the Thing for Nanas, our young, beautiful though inarticulate Raj Gond. Probably, however, no significance is to be attached to fact that she and her co-dancers start singing the Karma song:

> O you dumb boy, I would like to shake you
> Even a cat cries, miaow, miaow!
> Even a fox barks, feh, feh!
> But you dumb boy say not a word,
> And so I'd like to shake you.

November 17. Return home. As usual after opening a school, develop fever. Mrs Chumpie gives birth to five puppies under Shamrao's bed. Feel very cuss-cuss.

November 18. Shamrao sets off, not without dust and heat, and leaving all the puppies to me, for Leper Hospital, taking with him six lepers, ex-wife of Panda Bada and sub-wife of the late Gislu, none of whom have ever been in a train before In Shamrao's absence, as usual, feeling of loneliness more than compensated by delightful sensation of freedom from depressing inferiority complex which always assails me in presence of someone who can give intravenous injections, understands activated compost and can manufacture toothpaste out of chalk and ashes

Puppies still alive, but all—to our regret—totally unlike Bunter Sahib who is now carrying on furious flirtation with Jumping Joan Chumpie quite indifferent to this, and simply licks her puppies with large and wondering eyes.

November 19. Pleasant feeling of being at last one's

in Bombay Sweet peas coming on well and bumper tomato crop provides all the vitamins we want. Forget me not bed however, offers difficulties as six different seedlings appear together Carefully transplant a dozen of one variety and in evening Panda Baba points them out as well known weed of rice-fields.

December 2 All go to Senguda to open new school Welcomed with deafening enthusiasm with loud cries and letting off of guns. The school pitched on top of tiny hill and looks as if it might fall off at any moment. Cost Rs 40 or £3 to build 'Tis merry when gossips meet and villagers dance all night. Get some sleep on pile of straw in corner of ice-cold veranda Our charming mischievous and competent Brahmin is in charge and already highly popular with villagers who are Raj Gonds and so believe in blood

December 3 Develop customary fever Poppies and puppies developing well Sweet williams seem to have possibilities

December 8 Fearful abscess suddenly starts in upper lateral incisor (right) Quite unable to read write talk or eat How fortunate however that I live next door to a dispensary! Medicine chart reads as follows

12.30 p.m. Take maximum dose of morphia
No effect.
2.15 p.m. Take maximum dose of chloral.
No effect.
4.30 p.m. Take maximum dose of allodonal
No effect.
6.0 p.m. Reflect that after all suffering is very good for one

Enormous improvement in comfort and appearance on original. Entire cost under £10.

November 24. Shamrao returns with three lepers after week in hospital, leaving others to be operated. Interesting reaction of our lepers to civilization. All declare that though they saw many sahibs, not one of them was like *me*. Greatly flattered at this signal proof that our method does, in spite of all criticism, appeal to the masses. Shamrao however, rather unnecessarily, determines to elucidate this further, and discovers that what they really meant was that none of the other white men were so handsome, and that no one was such a *pukka sahib* as myself! Dear me!

Sugga reported to have asked after Nanas in the bazaar.

November 29. The remaining lepers return, with exception of Raja Ram and his mother. During night preceding day fixed for operation, Raja Ram persuades them all to run away. With their stumps of hands, they drag him along ground, his leg swollen and in agony, for five miles in dark, till they get bus for station. There guard refuses to allow them on train, but they fall at his feet till he relents. Raja Ram now living in remote village, in utter misery, waiting to die. The doctor said amputation would have been completely successful and he could have been fitted with wooden leg.

December 1. Give away four puppies, retaining fattest of them, by name Baloo (the Bear), a dog with a more debauched expression than I have ever seen on any living organism except perhaps on the elongated vacuity that passes for a face on the *microfilaria Bancrofti nocturna* that I once saw under the microscope

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the Wardha Ashram With anxious look at very in adequate sanitary arrangements go out to meet him and find pleasant creature in khadi with pocketful of testimonials and letter from Ashram saying that he has just come out of prison and should be very useful for our work I retire as business of talking still painful and Shamrao continues interview Presently he brings in testimonial from Jail Superintendent to say that as prisoner Balinath 'convicted only under Sec. 302 I P C., he will be suitable for school work etc.' We get out our copy of the Indian Penal Code and discover that Sec. 302 is 'Murder' Then why 'only'? Suddenly struck by thought of extraordinary suitability of would be workers forwarded to us by friends in other Ashrams Like the good friend who wrote to me the other day that she had found some jewellery that was only fit for the dustbin so she was selling it and sending the proceeds to Karanjia Laugh so much that enormous face turns purple with agony But we decide to accept Balinath as a worker

But alas next day puts much more serious complexion on matter On hearing Balinath's name all workers fall into state of violent agitation The murder does seem to have been very murderous. Twelve years ago Balinath was master in school near here and one of his pupils was the beautiful child of a very rich Teli (oilman) who had loaded him with gold ornaments One evening after school Balinath took the boy to the jungle and killed him He stabbed him five times in the throat to make the wound look as if it had been made by the claws of a tiger and while the child was still living broke his wrists and ankles in order to remove the ornaments. Finally he flung the still

6 15 p m Take maximum dose of this consoling thought.
No effect.
7 30 Take two ordinary aspirin
Immediate effect of complete relief and soothing sleep

Consider writing to manufacturers about this remarkable result—*a resolution which will doubtless be fulfilled in another and a better world*

December 9 Face at least double normal size *Chumpie appears to be going mad so we give her* remainder of morphia bottle containing at least four lethal doses. But beyond attack of hiccoughs suffers no untoward *effects. Can it be that morphia, or at* least our morphia not so strong as we had imagined?

December 10 Face now treble normal size and epidermis covered with unsightly beard Keep agony in control by *aspirin Have* photo taken for use as Easter card *illustrating Perfect Joy* Small section of subconscious that is *not yet changed* sends up message that the *sort of person* who really experiences Perfect Joy is that *Persian gentleman* whose servant wakes him each *morning* by *squirting into his mouth* a mixture *of milk* whisky and honey so that his first conscious *sensation may be the* taste of nectar Mortify *this thought.*

December 11 Face subsides slightly but still unable to talk or smile *or even* make adequate response to universal *greeting 'There is something the matter with* your face Baloo *sits on my carnations.*

December 12 At tea time, Sohori dashes in to say that distinguished looking *Gandhi man has arrived from*

the Wardha Ashram. With anxious look at very in adequate sanitary arrangements go out to meet him and find pleasant creature in khadi with pocketful of testimonials and letter from Ashram saying that he has just come out of prison and should be very useful for our work. I retire as business of talking still painful and Shamrao continues interview Presently he brings in testimonial from Jail Superintendent to say that as prisoner Balinath convicted only under Sec. 302 I P C. he will be suitable for school work etc. We get out our copy of the Indian Penal Code and discover that Sec. 302 is Murder Then why only ? Suddenly struck by thought of extraordinary suitability of would be workers forwarded to us by friends in other Ashrams Like the good friend who wrote to me the other day that she had found some jewellery that was only fit for the dustbin so she was selling it and sending the proceeds to Karanjia Laugh so much that enormous face turns purple with agony But we decide to accept Balinath as a worker

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breathing little boy into the mouth of a tiger s cave and departed There seems no doubt that Balinath was the culprit but some technical flaw in the evidence saved him from the gallows and he was sentenced to trans portation for life The crime of course created an in tense stir in the district and many children including our Phuggu left school for a time for fear they too might be murdered Our colleagues unanimous that not a parent would send his children to our schools if Balinath became a worker Mustapha Khan parti cularly insistent and declares intention of barricading his own house tonight Realize sadly that he is pro-bably right and advise Balinath to re start life in place where he is not so well known and give him his fare back to Wardha One touching thing about Balinath must be recorded—he has adopted a little untouchable *boy of the same age as his victim and has undertaken* to care for him and educate him all his life

December 12 night Leopard digs its way into *chicken shed and kills thirty of our chickens* In morn ing witness singularly pathetic sight of all these dead and rumpled bodies while one survivor a small hen with the manner of a Mrs Cluppins wanders about pecking a disconsolate meal from the bodies of her dead comrades Suggest to Mustapha Khan that the real culprit was Balinath getting his hand in for fresh adventures Mustapha Khan takes this quite seriously and moves off with set and anxious face to strengthen his barricade

December 13 Village headman with gun sits up in tree above *chicken shed to shoot leopard who is ex* pected to return for more *He falls asleep and leopard* enjoys *hearty dinner to the music of his snores*

December 14. Leopard walks cool as dammit into boy's hostel and chases Bunter Sahib round the Ashram

December 16 Leopard eats Jumping Joan

December 17 Leopard meets Tutta outside kitchen and gives him a good look.

December 18 Sohori decides that all this must stop, so prepares very ingenious trap for leopard A box containing small dog is slung across our well (deep but empty) and lowered a little below surface Mouth of well is then covered with readily collapsible material, straw, grass, etc., the idea being that leopard, hearing cries of dog will jump on to straw roof and fall through it into well, and thus be caught What is to happen then is not revealed Though greatly disturbed over ethical basis of these proceedings, reflect that no leopard capable of eating Jumping Joan will be so foolish as to walk into so obvious a snare

By somewhat unfortunate coincidence, there arrives by this evening's post a copy of Helen Waddell's *Beasts and Saints* which convinces me that I undoubtedly belong to former category No lions, I feel, will weep wide-mouthed above my grave, though indeed would be only too glad to have penitent leopard trotting at my heels, so impressive for visiting officials, but this leopard seems definitely *not* to have co-operative temperament

December 19 Further reading of *Beasts and Saints* is more reassuring, for did not the Abbot Helenus after crossing the river on the back of a crocodile, say to it 'Better is it for thee that thou shouldst die, than suffer the penalty for the slaughter of souls'? And the crocodile fell down, and died on the spot. While the Blessed Ammon, meeting a dragon breathing black foul fumes and uttering hisses and shrill shrieks, greeted it

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with these remarkable words, 'May Christ the Son of God slay thee, even as *He shall slay the great whale*'. And hearing this, that most dire dragon vomited forth *its spirit and its venom together, and burst asunder* with a loud crack. On the other hand, it is possible *that the Abbot Helenus and the Blessed Ammon* are not among the most lovable of the saints indeed can not remember ever *having* heard of them before

December 20 Party *of dancers* from Balkuar, fifteen miles *distant* arrives without warning at dawn to challenge our village *to dance* the Saila All work instantly abandoned and *young bloods* adorn themselves with their *best* clothes peacock's feathers and their wives' jewellery, while *old men go off to buy* liquor and the women prepare large and *doubtless* indigestible meals Saila continues all day, culminating in great serpent dance Notice Patiram disporting himself vigorously in consciousness *of no fewer than six of his* ex wives *in audience* and Kopi looking coyly out of folds of new sari *at three (past present* and future) husbands

December 22 Christmas presents begin to arrive *Someone sends a book token the most sensible present I have ever had Mother sends immense* cake and home *made Christmas pudding: Sundar's family send cake and* mysterious *Indian sweetmeats* and another cake comes *from friends in Bombay Mother also sends large box of presents for the brethren very exciting collection of* knives, *torches balloons inflatable ducks squeaking* mice, *performing monkeys gay* necklaces and mouth organs. *Atmosphere of Christmas now definitely apparent.*

December 24 Get a fifteen foot tree from jungle.

and set it up in middle of court At foot place card board crib with large tinsel stars Cover tree with oranges apples balloons chinese lanterns and presents Decorate court with two hundred little earthen lamps used for Diwali When lit up scene more like traditional old fashioned Christmas than anything I have ever seen No snow but very cold night. After supper plum pudding blazing with you know what distribution of presents to party of twenty-six, and all seem highly content

December 25 Very peaceful, save that as usual most of old soaks come begging but are as usual discouraged

December 27 Highly poisonous snake for long a respected resident in wall of my room chooses in auspicious moment to emerge from hole and devour young lizard There follows customary feverish outburst of non Franciscan attitude to animals in course of which most of my wall battered to ground and snake exterminated After this everyone moves off in triumph leaving me to clear up mess On other hand, animal world seems to get its own back in these parts, and last year no fewer than 1 349 people died of snake bite in the Central Provinces alone.

Adri s legal husband, to whom she was married in utter youth arrives—a sinister Panka with small moustache looking (like human life itself) solitary poor nasty brutish and short. Proposes to drag her away by force As he already has another wife Adri very properly refuses to abandon good and useful work in order to be drudge in another woman s house

December 29 Adri s husband mixes in her supper a Love Philtre (*Tila Dilruba* Regd Use it once and your most proud and indifferent darling shall be

enslaved for ever A packet of six times. Price Rs only) But Adri spots it in time and gives it to her little brother on whom it has no apparent effect

Nanas cannot hear name of Sugga without confusion This generally considered a Good Sign

December 31 Our little Mussalman girl Sarra over heard saying to her mother during the hols, 'I don't like being away from school these holidays *frighten* me' Either our children are dreadful little prigs or schools must be unusually happy places for cannot remember ever having expressed similar sentiment myself in rather chequered childhood.

1935

January 1 Considerable excitement owing to arrest of dhobi on charge of 'Lurking House-Trespass by Night', under Sec. 457, I.P.C. Dhobi has for long tried to win our custom and affection But it is only now as a lurking house-trespasser by night that we have really fallen in love with him Go down to police-station and have animated conversation through the bars during which he declares roundly that whole thing is a frame up because he refused to iron the Sub-Inspector's uniform free of charge As Sec. 457, I.P.C., is non-compoundable and non bailable, return home and develop fever

January 12 Nanas temporarily in charge of Birbaspur while Mustapha Khan looks after wife suffering from smallpox Nanas reported to have visited Sugga's house and to have sat with the mother for an hour without saying a word

Shamrao and I set out to explore for new centres Arrive at Karondi village four miles away in pouring rain and select good central site by lake under shadow of tallest hill in district. Proceed to Patan, ten miles away a really thrilling village on top of hill with wonderful views in every direction Vociferous welcome from inhabitants. Old lady, mother of poor Gulu the leper, washes our feet and weeps, while old

gentleman prostrates himself on ground before us saying we are Parameshwar, Hari Bhagavan—glow of pride kindled by this flattering demonstration abruptly fades on hearing that he is in the habit of doing this even to minor revenue officials

January 15 Dhobi returns from his trial a free man having been discharged for lack of evidence in high feather with himself and posing as authority on Indian politics Government he declares is just its officers are unjust In days of Great Good Queen there was no injustice why does not Pancham Jarge (this being Chhattisgarhi for the King Emperor) come himself to India and presumably to Karanjia and see with his own eyes what goes on? Why not indeed?

January 22 Shamrao's thirty-second birthday He definitely closes sweet-scented manuscript of his youth Parcel of presents from friends in England which arrived too late for Christmas comes in very opportunely here—soap and towels Ever-Ready razors fountain pens a brush and comb pencil-cases something for everyone while a game of skittles provides absorbed excitement

February 1 Very important ascetic who for years has renounced the world and its possessions murdered at Amarkantak and his private store of cash estimated at ten thousand rupees stolen Only really wealthy people in this district appear to be the sadhus This has unfortunate reaction on meaning of the Franciscan life for the more you try to follow Lady Poverty the more firmly convinced is everyone that you really own fabulous possessions.

February 3 English friend who reads that sort of thing sends me quotation from Cassian that the excite

ment of cultivating a fertile garden is too great a distraction and incapacitates the mind for spiritual exercises On other hand Gonds who visit my garden say curiously that when they look at the flowers they feel peaceful Mind rushes away to high brow reference to Richard Jefferies and that pure colour which is rest of heart

February 5 Arrival of little boy belonging to despised and untouchable Basor caste of workers in bamboo. Basors are supposed to be descended from devout ruler who refused to tax his people and supported himself by making bamboo fans This however less pious than it sounds for the fans were naturally full of enchantment, and King had only to break a fan to break his enemy

February 6 Cold as paddocks Nasturtiums begin to poke their heads of many colours through bushes of leaves. Fat bundle of Hindi posters sent us from the Panjab on such subjects as Thrift Malaria Vaccination Stud Bulls Care of the Eyes and Manure Pits Placard these everywhere but fear no one will ever have sufficient energy to read them. Children look clean and charming in new clothes but deprecate habit of Ram Lal (small boy with face of a dissipated medieval Cardinal) who takes off his pants and uses them as muffler round his neck

February 7 Little Basor boy discovered to be epileptic who has fits regularly at the turn of the moon. Now definitely adopts Ashram as his home and is ready to eat anything he tells us save crocodile or monkey No doubt, had Jeeves been present, he would have made appropriate reference to ancient Egypt

Crocodilon adorat
Pars haec illa pavet saturam serpentibus ibim

But we are able to assure the child that crocodile-tear soup and monkey chops have not yet been introduced as part of Ashram diet

February 8 Sweet peas well in flower, but have mistakenly planted all the white ones on left side of garden and all the coloured ones on other

February 9 Very little untouchability in Mandla District Indeed some castes like Mehras and Pankas which are anathema in other parts think no end of themselves here Shocked therefore to find children refusing to allow young Basor to eat with them With righteous anger inflaming our Gandhian bosoms rush to rescue only to find that ban had been imposed not because he was a Basor but because—as Ram Lal summarized the matter—*he smelt* The children in other words objected not to his status but to his flatus

February 10 Start our Ajib Khana or Museum There is a miniature Zoo (very odd to find item on bill To one rhinoceros As 14) and a model farm with ploughs and carts rollers trees sheep pigs and Farmer Jarge Most popular exhibit is Hornby train Add to these set of clay model figures bought in Allahabad old stuffed mongoose (*tail apparently eaten by rat*) and miniature house-boats from Kashmir Adorn walls with specimens of children's drawing embroidered mat from Egypt and woollen dolls

February 11 Ram Lal discovered after hugging me affectionately for some time to be full of fleas and has to go about stark naked and anointed with some foul

yellow ointment, while his clothes are being washed and disinfected by Shamrao

February 12 Vaccinator comes, and dispensary filled with weeping children. Some roll on ground roaring with fear Many parents also forcibly brought in Mrs Panda Baba done, but immediately goes home and rubs off serum with the sacred cow-dung, thus avoiding any ill effects

February 13 Elderly Baiga dowager, stout, squat, with decidedly hyperplatyrrhine nose, and pathetically hideous through ravages of leprosy in its acutest form, comes to stay in Leper Refuge, but only, she declares, on condition that sahib does not try to marry her. For days find myself unable to speak to her without em barrassment for fear that, like Mrs Bardell, she should find something of a matrimonial twinkle in my eye

February 14 Tutta though looking more than ever like a character in one of Wordsworth's true-to-nature poems beginning to make himself useful Cleans stable, feeds horse and goes to post. Apparently is cured of epilepsy, for he has had no attack in the last year More resigned to life of single blessedness, ex cept that once a week comes and holds my feet or Shamrao s, and with an embarrassed gurgle, begs us to find him a wife This unhappily not easy We approach one lady but she says she would rather wed a bit of wood.

February 15 Start building school at Karondi, on pleasant site by lake under shelter of tallest hill in district. Another Baiga joins Leper Refuge, this time charming and dignified old gentleman, but without nose or lips.

February 16 Commence cleanliness campaign, with

important but slightly vulgar programme of digging manure pits, making latrines, and tidying up everything everywhere.

February 17. Note with some alarm growing interest in manure. Decide to collect basketful of cow-dung daily as example to villagers—or is real motive sinister psychological perversion such as coprophilia?

February 18. Visit Narbada Ashram and find first-class latrine, but manure pit empty. Am informed that there is no cow-dung in village. Declare this to be impossible and, collecting basket and four little girls, go out to look for it. With great satisfaction, collect twelve basketsful, and still there is more.

February 19. Parents threaten to remove their children from schools if any more fuss about cleanliness, manure, and character-building. We want our children, they say, to read and write, but No More.

February 20. Agricultural expert arrives with cinema in lorry. Very pleasant little man, gives good advice about trees and garden. In evening, cinema show in front of police-station, but as it is full moon, pictures hardly a success. Captions entirely in English—a language known only to Sub-Inspector who leaves half way through. Very small audience, due to choice of police-station, consisting largely of officials and non-agriculturist shopkeepers who gaze at film revealing new methods of ploughing, sowing, and reaping without the slightest interest.

February 21. Inspired by cinema of previous night to order stud-bull which we, like Tristram Shandy's father, will keep for the service of the parish.

February 22. Re-start work on well at Tikeratola with three craftsmen from Pendra. Very manly and

independent people refuse to stay in Ashram and camp in open jungle near well in spite of renewed visits from leopard. Village headman again sits up for leopard but suspect that someone must have warned it in manner of classic advice given to Peter Rabbit by his mother Don t go into Mr MacGregor s garden your father had an accident there he was put in a pie by Mrs MacGregor

February 23 Leper refuge now full to overflowing with sixteen patients. Lepers garden looks very well circular bed a blaze of colour with clarkias and annual chrysanthemums while sweet peas reveal several new varieties which I have been unable to produce in my own garden Little Gendu to our great sorrow shows clear signs that he is infected with the disease

February 24 Theft of a few personal possessions from Ram Raj worker in charge of Barnai School Ask him not to report matter to police but he does so and two villagers are arrested Very disturbed about this and cut Ram Rajs allowance in order to give some help to families of accused Instruct our lawyer to give them what assistance he can Intolerable to think that we who are the real criminals (for we possess more than the average) should put in jail starving villagers who have been tempted by our superfluity

February 25 Large sack of nitrate of soda after wandering two months on railway at last arrives considerably depleted. Carrier says sack was too heavy so he left half at Pendra and a quarter in the house of a *sadhu* at Amarkantak. Trust *sadhu* will not try to eat it.

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February 25 Large sack of nitrate of soda after wandering two months on railway at last arrives, considerably depleted. Carrier says sack was too heavy so he left half at Pendra and a quarter in the house of a *sadhu* at Amarkantak. Trust *sadhu* will not try to eat it.

February 26 Violent row with police who can

beautiful blooms of varied colours. Of me as of Mr Collins it may at least be written that 'to work in his garden was one of the most respectable of his pleasures'

March 3 Apply soda nitrate everywhere Magnificent bush of white roses suddenly appears apparently created overnight but must have been preparing unnoticed for this display for a long time Fifty or sixty visitors staying in Ashram mainly pilgrims on their way to Amarkantak.

March 4 Sub-Inspector of Police tells me he has sent complaint to Government that I am friend of all sinners and criminals in district This is not apparently intended as a compliment

March 5 Give our little Basor boy four pice which comes in all to about a penny for the treat of the year the great festival at Amarkantak On his return ask him how he spent his fortune Tells us that he had to give one pice to the god Ganpati two pice were taken from him by a Man of God who had so thoroughly renounced the world that he was going about stark naked and he spent the fourth pice on sweets Feel depressed for remainder of day by this narration

March 7 Highest possible tribute paid our schools by visiting official who says The children in the District Council schools seem very timid but yours are not afraid of anyone Deep blue cornflower blossoms in lepers garden where Japanese chrysanthemums already making good show

March 10 Pansies and heliotrope show their faces Go to bed with touch of dysentery but very difficult to follow Shamrao's instructions to keep perfectly still since every time any nourishment brought me Baloo follows into garden and rolls and dances on flowers

March 13. Sudden visit of Civil Surgeon and a delightful soldier. Receive them in bed, with three days' beard and assortment of bedroom ware all too prominent. This hastily covered with copy of *Times Literary Supplement*, but wind blows it down in middle of conversation. Why is it that only English visitors in nine months should arrive on one day in year when Ashram has deserted its normal spotlessness?

March 14. Creep out of bed, and immediately begin tying up clarkias, which have been lying flat on's belly, to small bamboo stakes. This leads to regrettable quarrel with Shamrao who prophesies relapse and says only excuse for me is that I must be mad. Not for first time wonder if this may not be true.

March 20. The Festival of Phag, when all the Gonds with joy, pleasance, revel, and applause, transform themselves into beasts or, in other words, get tight. It is on this occasion that women have right to belabour men, and demand presents from them. After hiding indoors all day to avoid bands of aggressive feminists, go across to Leper Refuge after dark, only to find that someone has smuggled in some bottles of liquor and that they are all roaring drunk. Two old leper ladies, stout sticks grasped in more or less fingerless hands, totter towards me on their stumps and make ineffectual passes at my head, while Singaru with truer aim pours a bucket of red-coloured water, which must be swimming with *lepra bacilli*, all over me. Several drops enter left eye. Feel that this is, if ever, occasion when even I am justified in using all weapons at my command, and pour forth stream of *gali* of such vigour and variety that assailants are sobered and I am allowed to depart in haste to take unpleasant Lysol bath.

While bathing distant cries announce that Shamrao is enjoying same experience Learn two new adjectives and an improper noun

March 21 Fascinating box of old toys arrives from Bombay All day surrounded by a tumble of children excitedly examining them Take three dolls and a toy train to leper home Old Kopi who seems to have no recollection of her assault on me of the previous evening arranges them in a row and kisses them passionately As usual children comparatively indifferent while grown ups play with absorbed interest Very interesting to note absence of acquisitive instinct in aboriginals None of Gond children show signs of wanting to possess toys for themselves more sophisticated Hindu children however weep vociferously on finding they can t have them.

March 22 Find three dolls hanging from roof of leper home and strongly Adoptionist theology prevailing The dolls have already become three members of the Gond pantheon—Hardul Baba Thakur Deo and Dharti Mata (Mother Earth) Anything however less like Mother Earth than the round pink face of the doll chosen to represent her can hardly be imagined.

March 30 Hindu Range Officer visits us and presents us with beautiful baby deer who at once develops a surely irregular attachment for Baloo Ranger inspects library and asks for some books. 'No I wouldn t read a *novel* he says, shocked 'but some book dealing with Western social customs—have you anything by a writer called Dorothy Sayers?

April 2 There is at present, says the Census Report 'no sign among the peasants of the Central Provinces of a love of education for the sheer pleasure

it brings' But wherever education is made pleasurable, the peasants love it. Dokal, one of the most diminutive of our children, goes home every evening after school and teaches reading to a Gond woman in the village

April 4 Commence building the new Vidyamandir Panda Baba tells us with some pride, that he has been trying to cure case of cataract by squirting milk direct from a mother's breast into the eye

April 12 One perfect carnation unfolds itself with solemn dignity Asters are almost ready Heat increasing daily

April 20 Vidyamandir nearly ready As always, wildly excited by building operations Heat beyond temperate description Several more carnations, and a bed of asters, out. Well getting deeper and deeper, but no water yet Gendu breaks toy train

May 1 Celebrate somewhat prematurely—but after all what do dates matter at Karanjia?—the Silver Jubilee by opening the Vidyamandir Public meeting in evening at which I attempt to give account of chief events of last twenty five years, but am interrupted first by Brahmin official who rises suddenly to his feet and declares that the British Empire is an Empire on which sun never sets and then by Sub-Inspector of Police who gives fully one hour's speech on education and manure A good and kindly speech, but not mine Revenge myself by playing The Laughing Policeman and the Saucy Cook' on gramophone After dark, enormous numbers of Gonds and Baigas begin to arrive from all quarters till there are at least a thousand in the Ashram Shamrao presents a series of plays which would have been extremely amusing, and would have

pointed a moral as well, if anyone could have seen or heard them. Finally, dancing begins Count forty six separate dances and at least eighty drums 'The music of the drum' says a famous psychologist, 'is more closely connected with the foundations of aurally-generated emotion than that of any other instrument. It is complete enough in itself to cover the whole range of human feeling while it is near enough to the origins of musical invention to appeal most strongly to the primitive side of man's nature The emotional appeal of music is to a very large extent muscular Rhythm is practically a neuro-muscular quality' Exactly

May 2 Sleep all day exhausted by aurally-generated emotions of previous night.

May 3 Eleven lepers who have run away from famous Leper Home at Baitalpur, descend upon us in two carts. In spite, however of their addressing me as 'papa' we have to refuse them admission Flowers in garden now definitely withering in intense heat Notice a promising aster which like the man in Bacon has put its face into a most shrunken and wooden posture

May 5 Depart to camp at Kapildara, holy water fall seven miles distant, for heat in our little houses beyond description Pitch camp on attractive site just behind image of god Ganpati and several pilgrims do reverence to me instead, apparently mistaking me for that deity

May 6 Hear that not long ago a *sadhu* was devoured by a tiger on the very spot where we are now camping Decide place is rather gloomy

May 9 Move our camp to Kabir Chabutra which is cooler and more cheerful Unfortunately, however, a

cow is dying not far away and the trees are full of vultures who, in the words of Eha, are waiting for the end like American reporters Later, cow dies, and at once recognize adequacy of Eha's further description 'Such work cannot be made artistic, and the vulture is not an æsthete That bald head and bare neck are not ornamental, but they mean business they are the sleeves tucked up for earnest work.'

May 15 Highly decorative, semi nude *sadhu* visits Ashram and is at once consulted by Sohori and wife as to the best means of getting a child After considering their problem all day, and stimulated by a gift of two bottles of wine, *sadhu* announces that a Goddess will shortly visit Ashram in shape of black cobra who will give Sohori all that he desires

May 25 News reaches us that Sugga has been forcibly married to unattractive but persistent youth who has been serving as her *lamsena*, that is as one who works for several years in the household instead of paying bride money When the news is broken to Nanas, he is less disturbed than we expected for, as he very sensibly points out, marriage isn't everything and she can still run away and an elopement might save the expense of a formal marriage

June 10 Vidyamandir now in full swing with fifty boarders all suffering from itch There must be more specimens of the female *acarus* to the square inch in this Ashram than anywhere else in India At night, noise of scratching in school dormitory sounds like a horde of locusts destroying a field of wheat

June 12 Shamrao decides on a 'White Nights' campaign Removes all old bedding, imports four enormous beds to accommodate four children apiece,

and provides new clothes and blankets for all At night he comes with great vessel full of sulphur, strips everyone naked anoints them all over and puts them to bed A great hush follows

June 26 Large black cobra is found in Sohori s house Ashram now sharply divided into two schools of thought. The Sohori Party believes that the proper way to treat black cobras in your bedroom is to offer them milk and to pray to the indwelling Goddess to give you a son The Maruti School on the other hand considers that the only thing to do is to burn chillies in the neighbourhood and show it peacock s feathers in the hope that it will go away As it is Sohori s house however and his son that is in question Sister Cobra is allowed to remain unmolested but Sohori and his wife sleep out-of-doors for some days in case of accidents.

June 29 Ramlal s mother having performed a sensational elopement Ramlal and his little sister Dongrahin become permanent members of our household their father apparently not being very good with children Dongrahin is only three years old and spends most of her time eating She comes first to us and shares our food wanders along to Maruti s house in time for a snack there drops into Sohori s cottage for a bite and finally arrives at the school in time for her proper meal with the other children

July 10 Gang of dacoits enter Ashram at dead of night and with infinite secrecy and competence remove our safe from room which is surrounded by sleeping children and carry it away into the jungle. There they batter it with stones and axes but it stands up well to their assault. Lepers hear the noise but remain firmly

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in their beds under the impression that it is caused by a party of drunken ghosts About daybreak dacoits abandon their efforts and hide safe under some bushes.

July 11 Wild excitement in Ashram, not unmixed with relief that dacoits did not adopt more usual method of extracting riches, which is to urinate into their victim s mouth till he hands over his keys About midday safe is found and brought back in triumph to the Ashram But unfortunately it is so damaged that though thieves couldn't open it, nor can we All money inside, and no chance of getting any more for some time

July 13 Panther makes its way into room where Baloo is sleeping under children's bed and removes it but very considerately does no damage to children who lie holding their breath and pretending to be corpses

July 15 Specialist in safe breaking arrives and cuts open door of safe and we are at last able to satisfy our creditors

July 20 Customary display of balsam zinnias mari golds and gaillardias but most of new flowers swept away by torrents of rain

July 30 Returning from visit to branch Ashram see from afar Tutta looking out for us from brow of Ashram hill Drawing nearer perceive that he is possessed by a strange excitement stumping up and down on his poor uneven feet. When we arrive, he falls at Shamrao s feet exclaiming 'Brother, I have found a mate Please arrange' Young woman of average appearance but encumbered by repellent small boy, has come to stay in Ashram and has expressed her willingness to marry Tutta provided we undertake to support her and small boy for rest of their lives Feverish consultations, confer

ences and intrigues follow Tutta sits feverishly smoking cigarette after cigarette and even goes so far as to attempt to ingratiate himself with small boy Night falls on unfinished conversations but Council of the League will meet tomorrow

July 31 A wedding has been arranged and will immediately take place between Tutta Gond (outcasted for eating with Christians) and Phagni Pankin (outcasted for having flirted with a Mussalman two years ago)

August 4 Domestic life of happy couple somewhat marred by behaviour of our local ladies. Why don t you marry a block of wood? asks one as Phagni fetches water from the village well We hope you enjoy those maimed embraces, says another Beware of the eunuch s wife says a third She must be a witch.

August 5 Phagni apparently brooding over these insults but Love has made a new man of Tutta who now works all day in spite of his crippled arms

August 6 Phagni nowhere to be found and inquiry in village reveals fact that she has run away with elderly man of her own caste Tutta searches for her for some time his cries echoing among the hills and frightening flocks of green parrots from their nests But the eternal rocks but echo back his voice so he returns eats a hearty meal has a bottle of wine and goes to bed.

August 10 Some consolation for us all in news that Phagni has forsaken likewise her new but ancient lover

August 16 Old Kopi after keeping cheerful through twenty three years of leprosy dies of dysentery in the Refuge. She was the Didi, the elder sister of the Ashram.

August 25 Giri Mata. Children observe this

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picturesque ceremony, when all go stumping about on stilts, the idea being apparently that this will persuade the crops to grow as high as they are

September 3 Our decision to charge very small nominal sum for medicine causes dismay among the villages until Panda Baba saves situation by suggesting that medicine will be much more efficient if an offering is made in its honour before it is taken

September 8 In Bombay being ill *Stay with Wilfrid David now writing new and even better novel Have some hopes of collecting a little money*

September 10 Start learning sewing and embroidery sewing strikes me as trifle pedestrian but am filled with excitement over embroidery but wonder if I will ever know enough or have enough patience to teach it to Gond children

September 20 Go with Parsi friend to beg for medicines from door to door in the Drug Market but after visiting three shops without being able to extract even a packet of soda bicarb give it up Parsi friend however, continues with great heroism and ultimately is able to fill two large packing cases with the spoils

September 25 Make another and fairly successful expedition in company of celebrated Gujarati solicitor We first visit Judge of the High Court very friendly courteous unproductive then a Brahmin merchant very unfriendly discourteous productive After some vigorous conversation in Gujarati with solicitor friend, merchant turns to me and says in English I am giving Rs 75, not because I have the slightest interest in you or in your work but because my friend here has asked me to What possible good can a foreigner do in India? The only thing he can do is to clear out.' For a moment

consider telling him to take himself and his seventy five rupees to——, but vision rises before me of amount of rice that can be bought for this sum, and decide to let it go We go on again, this time to hospitable Gujarati household, where we drink delicious spiced milk sitting on a swing and I feel sick. After appropriate interval, solicitor friend touches delicately on question of a donation. Gujarati merchant says, 'Before I contribute to your work I would like to ask you a few questions Tell me, first, up to what standard have you read? This question always so embarrassing, but I murmur something about having been in the B.A class at Oxford which seems to satisfy him 'And now,' he goes on, 'tell me about your sex life. Fortunately, before I can answer, he leans forward and says, 'I would give a larger donation if you were a married man You must marry It is the law of life Later, if you have the good fort—' a cough from his wife reminds him that he himself is married— if you have the great sorrow of losing your partner then you may go to the forest and live unmarried Otherwise something will come along and then (*pp*) there will come (*cr*) a HITCH (*ff*)' He sinks back satisfied and we move on to darling old Parsi lady, whose house is decorated with pictures of Edward the Peacemaker and the Great Good Queen 'Yes, indeed, I will help you she says. 'For is it not the English who have made India what it is? And she gives me a cheque for a hundred rupees.

September 30 Wilfrid gives very exciting party for me must be the first party I have ever been given, and invites no fewer than a hundred guests Not all of these come, but quite enough to put everyone in good humour with themselves and even with me. Last of guests reads

like a Pelmanism advertisement—the Mayor, an ex mayor, five famous editors four well known doctors, a consul, Sir Phiroze Sethna two film stars and a famous dancer Mr M R Jayakar takes the chair and I talk to the company for far too long but with a sense that this is the only chance I will ever get and I had better make the most of it

October 1 All day cheques fall like manna, and by evening am a thousand rupees to the good and a puff by a gossip writer In the evening depart by the Calcutta Mail with vast quantity of baggage including 200 bits of soap 500 marbles, a toy motor-car, four Rhode Island Red cockerels four pet rabbits a bundle of railway posters and two large parcels of bulbs Travel second-class as dignified invalid but as usual lie awake all night

October 2 Feel very exhausted, but somewhat diverted by having to feed rabbits and cockerels For some obscure reason the rabbits are entered on the railway bill as 'birds' Ticket-collector inspects me and rabbits with hostile air and mutters that something *is wrong I reply coldly that he is evidently no orni* thologist, and he departs quickly

Long wait at Katni during which most of inhabitants inspect me motor cockerels and rabbits Ultimately, fat and friendly guard comes to my carriage and leaning through the window says 'Those your birds sir?'— 'Yes' I reply and, trying to conceal the fact that I only learnt the name two days ago continue, 'They are Rhode Island Reds—rather fine *don't you think?*'— 'They're no good' says the Guard 'I've kept a chicken farm for twenty years and I ought to know Tempera mental, that's what those Reds are Now what you want

in this Province is Ostrogoths (or was it Austrogoths?) And are those rabbits?' he goes on, peering at them. 'A poor breed. Now I could have let you have an excellent pair' Up till now had been feeling that it was a pity that railway officials did not stick to their proper jobs, but since whole business has now come into the open as a sales talk, feel somewhat comforted. 'You haven t any pigeons? I ask carelessly 'Have I any ——? he replies incredulously 'Say, mister, I am the pigeon breeder of this district. Now what do you say to half a dozen real homing pigeons at just the price they cost me?

October 3 2.30 a.m. Reach Pendra Road, and am met by the good Kartik and a party of villagers Panda Baba was to have been present, but got drunk to celebrate my coming Bid farewell to the Guard who advises me to give the cockerels a good stiff dose of Epsom Salts on reaching home, and promises to send the pigeons the following week.

6.0 a.m. Panda Baba at last appears wearing queer floppy red cap which makes him look like a gnome or leprechaun Set out for Karanjia and reach it two days later on

October 5 and receive usual welcome, specially vociferous from children and lepers. Dongrahin declares that I am even more handsome than I used *to* be, and hugs me round the knees for considerable period. Find Tutta married at last to quite astonishingly ugly lady supposed to be a little crazed in her wits who at once begins to call me 'Uncle' But apart from her willing ness to marry Tutta do not find any other evidences of insanity

October 7 Old friend, Hyder Ali, dying of malignant

malaria, and dear old lady in village, looking just like Death in *Everyman*, also dying, but very much cheered by occasional doses of brandy. Ancient *sadhu*, who is 'doing' the Narbada River, arrives with acute dysentery.

Garden full of handsome, but rather ordinary flowers, except for one magnificent dahlia that has grown from a seed, and a bed of feathered cockscombs. All my perennials have been uprooted and everything else pruned in the wrong places. Feel specially mournful for chrysanthemums reared with immense trouble, and now thrown away. Whole hill is, however, resplendent with literally thousands of zinnia blooms, and some of the marigolds are of a wonderful size and colour.

October 8. Pull up most of the stuff in my garden and decide to start all over again. Begin with extensive digging operations. How anything has ever grown at all is a mystery, for four inches below surface find enormous rocks. These are heaved up with a good deal of fuss, and new earth in preparation for the new heaven is filled in.

October 10. Turn old school buildings into Museum which is now beginning to be worthy of the name. With Shamrao's help lay out a large railway system in the middle of the house, but find that we have mixed up rails of one-inch and two-inch gauge. However, by stretching a point or two we get the thing going, and trains now run between England, Africa and Japan to the wonder and delight of everyone.

October 12. Hyder Ali determined to die, but really getting steadily better under Shamrao's ministrations. Makes his will and gives us the specifications for his grave. Old lady, however, sinking fast. During our visit

to her, three ferocious dogs, the bane of the whole village, start a furious battle round her bed, and she weeps and has to be comforted with a little more of my brandy Put two rabbits in the leper home, and keep the other two—a beautiful white creature named Sita and a golden brown named, of course, Rama—in the school.

October 13 The three dogs invade the school, and somehow break open rabbit hutch and kill Sita. Rama escapes but dies soon after from shock. Filled with the purest spirit of revenge, Shamrao takes poor mangled body of Sita stuffs her with strychnine, and throws her out in the road where the three dogs are prowling about snarling and growling They fall on their prey and within half an hour all are dead But there is no limit to the reverberations of violence A vulture swings down and a squawk of crows from a neighbouring tree to eat the dogs that ate the rabbit They take their fill, fly up into the air and then one two three, drop dead out of the sky

October 14 Garden now ready, and with great trepidation plant bulbs for first time in my history—twelve gladioli some thirty cannas from the School of Art Gardens in Bombay and dahlias from our friends the Pochas The dahlia bulbs are especially alarming as each has its own name—Nugel's Champion Miss Kroes, Buckeye Bride Royal Flush, Mrs Carl Salbach and so on—but I manage to get them down somehow Seeds are easier and sow large quantities of these, both in Ashram and Leper Home—sweet peas hollyhock, petunia, wallflower carnations pinks, verbena, schizanthus, salpiglossis, lobelia, begonia, forget me not, arctotis and many other new and exciting things.

October 16 White ants attack seed-beds with astonishing *ferocity Hyder Ali and old sadhu much* better, old lady dies In evening a centipede fully six inches long runs up my leg Its bite is said to be fatal and *feel very heroic until villagers go on to say that* it has never been known to use its executioner's privilege

October 20 A rat at last caught in one of our traps, one of those *instantaneous* neck break ones *Our* night watchman immediately goes to the trap removes the rat roasts it over his fire and he and Tutta enjoy a midnight feast.

October 25 Crate of pigeons purchased from friendly Guard reaches us safely Let them out in Ashram compound and they immediately go into Chapel where four of them sit in great contentment round statue of St Francis. The piety of a fifth however is less fortunate He perches on head of Our Lady who falls over and breaks in half

October 26 Dongrahin now covered with sinister looking sores but *surely unnecessary for her to remove* bandage (full of ointment and much else) and put it *down in the middle of Blake's Vision of the Daughters of Albion* She also removes upper half of Our Lady *no longer suitable for the purposes of devotion* and I *find her later under my pillow the hollow part used as* a cache *for half sucked sweets.*

October 28 Pigeons do much damage to hollyhock *seedlings by sitting on them and a hairy caterpillar eats* entire crop of godetias.

October 29 Letter *from emotional young student* (Bengali) *applying for membership of Ashram so that* as he says "*he may serve the forgotten humanity whose* recollections very often bring forth my tears the know

ledge of whose condition and means of existence afflicts me severely whose tales of woe and miseries make me ponder over the purpose behind their creation and mutter—To what end?'

November 2 The Rhode Islanders eat the whole of a sitting of eggs on which a fat hen has been working with great industry for weeks Reflect that this is the eighth anniversary of my landing in India Somewhat depressed by all this and I mutter To what end?

In the afternoon however greatly cheered by report of educational activities in Leper Refuge A family of Mehras (a caste which is generally regarded as untouchable but here in Mandla thinks no end of itself) now living there the father of which has been a teacher Asked him last week to start teaching his fellow patients to read and write Today he tells me that this is by no means easy the tongues of his Gond pupils being so fat and heavy But, he says he has found a way round the difficulty He powders up some pepper makes it into a paste with a little oil and at the beginning of his classes applies this to the tongues of all his pupils. When I protest at this barbarity all the Gond lepers assure me that it is just what they want. It makes our tongues move quickly and lightly and we can learn better they say

November 3 Three gladioli up and one dahlia but most of the cannas seem to have gone bad. Dig one up to see and find my suspicions confirmed—nothing left but a strong smell of earth Suggestions to send ancient *sadhu* away to hospital but he resists this on ground that he is performing a *pradakshina* (that is, he is going right round up one bank and down the other)

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October 20. A rat at last caught in one of our tra one of those instantaneous neck-break ones. Our nigh watchman immediately goes to the trap, removes tl rat, roasts it over his fire and he and Tutta enjoy midnight feast.

October 25. Crate of pigeons purchased from friend Guard reaches us safely. Let them out in Ashra compound, and they immediately go into Chapel, wher four of them sit in great contentment round statue c St Francis. The piety of a fifth, however, is less fortu nate. He perches on head of Our Lady, who falls ove and breaks in half.

October 26. Dongrahin now covered with sinister looking sores, but surely unnecessary for her to remov bandage (full of ointment and much else) and put i down in the middle of Blake's *Vision of the Daughter of Albion*. She also removes upper half of Our Lady no longer suitable for the purposes of devotion, and I find her later under my pillow, the hollow part used as a cache for half-sucked sweets.

October 28. Pigeons do much damage to hollyhock seedlings by sitting on them, and a hairy caterpillar eats entire crop of godetias.

October 29. Letter from emotional young student (Bengali) applying for membership of Ashram so that, as he says, 'he may serve the forgotten humanity whose recollections very often bring forth my tears, the know-

all the bonds of intimacy This friendship comes from far' says Panda waving his arms at the sky 'All other friendships come from the earth and belong to it. But Brahma and Ramachandra were *sakhi*' Finish building a magnificent chicken house but one of the *Rajmurga* (as the villagers call our Rhode Islanders) crows during the night and we have to restrain Tutta who wants to kill it because it has obviously been calling up the evil spirits to annoy him.

November 12 Find syphilitic old friend and family in middle of night shivering in the forest *sadhu* having again appeared to them in a dream and ordered them to leave his house without delay

November 14 Read of a popular but heavy-drinking district officer who has become an object of veneration to one of the primitive tribes Every year they revive his memory by breaking a bottle of liquor above his grave. No doubt after my own death the Gonds will honour me by burning a copy of the latest P G W before my tomb More dahlias now in evidence and two cannas appear to have survived.

November 17 Man suffering apparently from keratodermia blenorrhagica of his left foot is brought to the Ashram from a village forty-five miles away Amputation being the only thing possible we offer to send him to hospital at Bilaspur to which he cheerfully consents He reveals later that he went there many years ago and then thrills his audience with lurid account of hospital life. They hold you down on the table he says and the doctor takes a great knife and begins cutting You scream with pain How much will you give me? says the doctor If it is not enough he goes on cutting The men who hold you down cry

of his Mother, the Narbada River, and mustn't leave her side

November 4 *Sadhu* takes offence at a slight unpunctuality in the cleaning of his bed pan, and says that nobody loves him and that he is going away We let him go since he is now quite well enough to resume his pious wanderings. Great popularity of new tailoring and carpentering departments now added to school, but notice regrettable lack of enthusiasm for constructing new ploughs or other useful implements, everyone's attention being centred on how to make deck-chairs Suspect that Mahatma Gandhi would not approve of this

November 6 Unfortunate old gentleman, in most unpleasant condition of tertiary syphilis and no fewer than eight children, a wife, a mother of extreme age and a decrepit horse, comes to stay and occupies room formerly blessed by presence of *sadhu*

November 7 *Sadhu* appears to old gentleman in a dream and asks what he is doing in his room The whole family shift from one corner of the room to the other in the hope that this dream will not be repeated

November 9 Going through the forest at night, my lantern goes out and a little later it being very dark a herd of wild pig surround me making the most alarming noises Reflect how infinitely more soothing and amiable is the sound made by pigs when they are frizzling as bacon on the fire and how humiliating it would be to be gored to death by a herd of swine Shout and roar at the top of my voice and after a while they go away

November 11 Sweet peas coming on strongly Panda Baba and I plan to become *sakhi*, the most sacred of

time, and today concentrate on Hands. At critical moment buffalo wanders on to field in front of goal, thus making it impossible for anyone to score

November 29 Family of cats including a baleful black Tom apparently spontaneously created for the purpose, invade the Ashram and at once start in on the rats disturbing them in the middle of a pleasant meal off brand new copy of *Ripeness Is All*

November 30 Very difficult to run a school, Gonds being so excessively temperamental Great objection to policy of self support, several boys leaving because they have to fetch their own water We have come to learn, they say we want to use our brains not our hands Perhaps manual work is the luxury of intellectuals Flowers still doing well but doves and rabbits refuse to lay any eggs.

December 1 Two charming boys but both with hereditary syphilis, one with a hole right through roof of mouth the other with marked Hutchinsonian teeth, come to school Vast quantities of stores begin to arrive, sacks and sacks of rice dal wheat salt, gur and so on The new barn unfortunately not ready

December 2 Our two Mussalman friends, Hyder Ali (now quite recovered) and Mustapha Khan come to dinner and after enormous meal begin to describe to us Gond customs and beliefs, towards which they do not seem to have that attitude of reverent tolerance which one would like to see. By the end of the evening however they reveal fact they have themselves absorbed a good many Gond beliefs specially with regard to the Evil Eye Hyder Ali tells how he was once eating a dish of gram, and a woman looked at him, and he had indigestion for three months. Another day, he was

Money, money, give us more money. Then when you give all you have, they smother you with a medicine that makes you unconscious. In spite of these horrors, however, he seems very willing to go there again.

November 18. Begin to make football field. After thorn-bushes and great tufts of grass have been cleared away, fine open stretch of ground appears, but more like golf-course than anything else. However, mark it out in highly professional manner, remembering that I was once Captain of the Merton 2nd XI Hockey team in a season when we lost every match by something like 15 to nil.

Tutta breaks out all over into sinister-looking swellings, which he attributes to his wife, darkly suspecting her of the Evil Eye, and a serious domestic tiff results.

Affable Circle-Inspector of Police calls to see me, and we discuss Crime, of which the Gonds (in his opinion) are remarkably innocent. He reveals existence, however, of band of robbers, all Pankas, most of whom appear to be our intimate friends.

November 23. The later rains having failed, we are threatened with a food-shortage, so we start filling our granaries with all manner of store. In fact decide to pull down our barns to build greater, and go to bed with slightly uneasy feeling that this far-sighted policy has not always been rewarded.

November 24. Awake in morning with distinct feeling of relief that during night our souls have not been required of us, and press forward with building of new barn with energy.

Our first football match. A great success, though played with bare feet; the bunkers on the whole add to the excitement. Only possible to do one rule at a

ghee poured on it. A thin smoke rises We all dip our fingers in a bowl of milk and touch each other's foreheads. Then Panda Baba places his hands on my head. I do the same to him, and we exchange rosaries and coconuts Then two brass dishes are brought, in his is some rice salt and a rupee in mine is rice, salt a dhoti and a blanket. We exchange dishes three times and say, '*Sitaram Sakhi*' The thing is over We shall be companions for all eternity

Mrs Panda Baba and even the ex Mrs Panda automatically become my *sakhi* also 'Will I spend all eternity with them also? I ask with some trepidation 'Certainly' replies the old man with an air of great benevolence Hope he doesn t think that after this life is over I am going to take the ex Mrs Panda off his hands

The coconuts are smashed and bits are given to all We sit round the fire and talk theology Panda Baba tells us all about Bihi Mata who lives between the eyebrows and Hardul Baba who protects the village from cholera He adds what a wonderful thing it is that I should have come six thousand miles just to be his *sakhi* Not to be outdone in these courtesies I remark sententiously that 'It is all by the grace of our holy mother Narbada —which goes down very well indeed, but Shamrao who really has *no* religion, bursts out laughing and spoils the effect.

Late at night after an excellent meal cooked by Sohori whom Panda Baba has borrowed for the purpose, we are put to bed in a room decorated with antlers fishing prongs a bamboo snare for birds musical instruments, eight different kinds of axes six bells, a gigantic spear, and all the spirits of the Gond Pantheon. The younger

given some meat, a woman looked at it, and directly they put it on the fire it burnt away to nothing. Yet another woman overlooked his favourite cow, and after that, whenever they made curds of milk, worms appeared. Mustapha Khan has also been bewitched. When he was a boy at school, an old woman looked at him, and he *immediately began to pass blood. He was dying,* but they called a meeting of the village, and the woman lifted her spell. 'My blood stopped,' said he with great satisfaction, 'but in three days the woman was dead herself.'

December 3. Question agitating all is will doves or rabbits start first? Hens sitting already, in spite of cannibalistic tendencies of Rhode Islanders. In the *middle of night, bed made of country string* suddenly gives way, and I descend with a large crash on to a framed picture that had been temporarily stored there for safety.

> Where is my golden palace,
> Where my ivory bed?

Ah, where indeed?

December 6. Proceed to Bondar in order to be initiated into *sakhi*-ship with Panda Baba. Road leading to his house decorated with poles and bunches of hay. We go and sit round fire in his little house, discussing the beauties of friendship, and gradually the villagers assemble. At last, Mrs Panda comes out and cow-dungs a small patch in the middle of the court just below the sacred pole. Then with a little flour she traces some fantastic patterns on the ground. Panda *Baba squats down on one side, I sit opposite, and two* others complete the square. A little fire is made, and

hands—they get quite enough of that at home, and they must be taught English.

December 14 Sohori, who had been put out of caste, is readmitted (on payment of a handsome fine) by picturesque ceremony All his caste-fellows go over to the Narbada River, and he stands in the middle of the stream. His maternal uncle then scoops up some of the water and pours it over him, and Sohori says to the on lookers on the bank, 'Am I to stay for ever in this mud?' They say, 'Yes.' He replies 'I have given you a big present, you must take me out. They all rush down into the river and drag him out and he goes home and gives them a feast. Returns to Ashram about midnight and very drunk.

December 15 Very exciting match between Gonds and Pankas which is ultimately won by the Gonds owing to the fact that their tribe preponderates among the spectators who whenever the ball goes outside, propel it violently towards the Pankas' goal Nanas plays an excellent game urging on his side with weird tribal noises The Pankas manage to score one goal by placing outposts within a few yards of the enemy's camp and as we have not yet done the off-side rule, am power less to prevent it.

Adri's co-wife has very exciting experience with a tiger As she is cleaning rice in her courtyard a tiger leaps into the house brushing against her as it goes, and takes refuge in one of the rooms. With great presence of mind the girl rushes to the door and shuts it in They then send for the nearest person with a gun who comes and shoots it.

December 16 Depart for Bombay in response to invitation to go and take part in the Christmas Day

Gonds present, who seem to have been affected by this deplorable modern spirit, mock at Panda's private chapel, but Sohori rebukes them, saying that there are three powerful things in the world, money, the virtue of people like myself, and the unseen spirits—and to all of them we should pay attention.

December 7. At last one of the doves lays an egg. All eyes now turned on rabbit-hutch, but in spite of studying carefully what does do and what does don't, find myself unable to prognosticate.

December 8. Leading villager Julan objects to our boys using soap and expresses his distaste by calling Nanas a Christian. Nanas, naturally outraged by this supreme insult, retaliates by throwing Julan into the pond. Nanas, by the way, has apparently given up any idea of matrimony and is trying to become a tailor.

December 10. Tell Sohori in a fit of candour that he has no brains in his head at all. '*No,*' he says, with some recollection of Panda Baba's theology. '*But Bihi Mata sits there, and she does instead.*'

December 13. Suffer acutely from hiccoughs, in other words from '*sudden, short, convulsive, spasmodic inspirations, attended by a peculiar sound produced in the larynx or upper part of the windpipe, spasmodic closure of the glottis, immediately followed by expiration*'. But remembering old custom of holding breath and running up and down stairs, get some relief by *running up and down the hill, as there are no stairs here.*

Deputation of parents who object to modern methods of education. Our children, they say, must be given corporal punishment; they must learn everything by heart—*otherwise how can they show the village that they* know anything? They must not do anything with their

seconds in excess and away goes a striking epithet At last we get it right but having read it over so often speech now sounds to me indescribably foolish

December 24 Develop heavy cold which in spite of fact that there are so many other parts of the body that might be attacked makes straight for my throat and I find myself hardly able to speak. However am able to enjoy admirable Christmas dinner at house of famous artist where for first time in my life I drink milk punch but fortunately do not get enough to suffer fate of Mr Pickwick.

December 25 Spend wretched Christmas gargling with warm water and salt to keep my throat in order Borrow woollen vest which is all that a woollen vest should be that is, it keeps me in a state of acute torment but so warm that my cold can almost be felt passing out of me In the evening refuse to speak at all in order to keep my Golden Voice in a fit state of preservation All this has its reward in the end for when the red light goes on at 8 16½ p m I am able to speak without once clearing my voice. Directly this is over dash to station and after having a second-class gentleman's dinner catch the train for home

December 26 Stop one day in Hoshangabad with Miss Hilda Cashmore who is opening a settlement for Gonds about fifteen miles outside the town a splendid and heroic venture Visit her jungle site and see two Gond villages quite different from ours, and I think poorer Very pleasant day though slightly embarrassed by Indian Christian who brings fat infant up to me and says to it Now recite the Lord's Prayer for the sahib darling

world broadcast which led up to a talk by no less a person than King George V Flattered by this in spite of the fact that my share is only two and a half minutes. Met by friendly railway guard who says he wouldn't have sold those doves to anyone else under twenty rupees and offers me four Belgian Rocks two geese and a dozen ducks an offer which I close with at once

December 18 Spend a day at Wardha where I see the Mahatma for a few minutes Looks very weak and ill apparently fussed into a collapse by the domestic quarrels of his disciples How wise of Christ to have had only twelve all men! No one seems very pleased at this broadcasting the general idea being that I am rising above my proper station 'How did they ever hear of you? inquires Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Buy *Death at Broadcasting House* at the railway bookstall and read it furtively in order to acquire the right vocabulary and atmosphere Try the word 'blattner phone' on Seth Jamnalal Bajaj which seems to impress him but he fortunately doesn t ask me for a definition of it

December 20 Reach Bombay and go in the after noon to the broadcasting studio where I have to read article on Beethoven full of obscure German names in front of microphone in order to become ether-conscious. Am told that I have a good microphone voice but in spite of this encouragement sweat with embarrassment when we are turned on to London and I have to do my speech no fewer than three times so that they can make a record of it of exactly the proper length The first time it is thirteen seconds too long and one of my best sentences has to go out The next time it is six

December 27. Rejoin the Calcutta Mail at Itarsi, where I find Margaret Moore and two turkeys coming to visit us. At Katni, where we have to change, give the turkeys a heavy meal of chappatti. Consider whether it is necessary to break the chappattis up for them or not, but eventually decide to give them whole. 'After all,' says Margaret, 'they have more time than we have.'

December 28 Go up to Karanjia by car Margaret Moore bears journey very well, but is somewhat critical of fact that I seem less concerned about her safety than that of turkeys whom she insists on calling the Macbeths. On arrival find that most of flowers in my garden seem to have grown downwards in my absence, save for one magnificent pink Nugel's Champion dahlia, while rats have eaten at least half the sweet peas. The lepers' garden, on the other hand is flourishing The turkeys are let loose in my back garden but at once go indoors and roost on my bed, which again excites unfavourable comment from Margaret Dongrahin gives us a rapturous welcome and after a bath and some clean clothes, looks extremely pretty In evening after Sohori has entertained us on his flute, we have Beethoven's *Pastoral Symphony*, which is really most appropriate and I bring out my three big volumes of Wordsworth which, however, remain unread

December 29 Keep Christmas in a torrential downpour of rain which comes at exactly the wrong moment, just as we have lit the lamps on the Christmas Tree However, everybody seems to enjoy themselves, and we have a great feast, in which all the different castes take part, sitting slightly apart from one another Find that

in my absence the Gonds have been demanding that a certain record, in which a rather horsey gentleman sings the praises of glorious beer, should be played to them on the gramophone, as it reminds them of me.

December 30 In the morning we are visited by a picturesque group of wandering minstrels called Bhimas, apparently an offshot of the Gond tribe. Some of their songs quite charming, and their dancing excellent, but they are not very well informed about the facts of life. 'Do you know anything of your past?' we ask, all agog for some fresh anthropological information 'We don't know anything about the past, what we are interested in are our stomachs.'—'Have you ever heard of Mahatma Gandhi? we asked then, applying this universal test of wider intelligence. 'We are not interested in Mahatmas all we care for is the stomach' they reply again, affectionately patting that organ.

A kite, seeing the nice red nose of the he-turkey, and apparently thinking it is a piece of fresh meat, swoops down and tries to carry it away But the he-turkey keeps its nose and runs for refuge underneath my bed. Fall into a condition of acute malarial cachexia and coo like a dove for two hours, in the midst of which Margaret Moore has to take her departure.

December 31 Feel decidedly better, malaria appa rently of what doctors call the benign type, though that is hardly the word I would have chosen myself. The Macbeths eat several young carnations, but am too full of quinine to care very much Shamrao receives encouraging letter from elderly missionary lady 'Even,' she writes, 'though this Mr Elwin may not actually commit sin in his Ashram, he will do no good, and

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NOTES

Acarus Scabiei A round greyish white insect like a tortoise, covered with hairs and bristles, its head carrying strong jaws for both burrowing and snapping, which is much addicted to digging itself into the skin of Gond children. Happily for our peace of mind, it is only visible underneath the microscope.

Agaria. The blacksmith sub-tribe of Gonds, a small tribe only ten thousand strong, who live mostly on the Maikal Range, and gain a scanty living by making ploughshares, axes, etc., for their neighbours who, most improperly, look down on them and refuse to eat from their hands. They worship the usual Gond deities, but on special festivals do honour to the instruments in the forge and adore Lohar Sur, the black demon of the iron kilns.

Ahir. A very large and important Hindu caste, at least three-quarters of a million of them live in the Central Provinces alone. In most of our villages there is a family of Ahirs, whose duty it is to look after all the cows and milk them For this service, every fifth day they are allowed to keep all the milk of the village for themselves. They regard Krishna as their special patron, as he was himself a cowherd. Their favourite festival is the Marhai, when they get drunk and perform very exciting dances that symbolize their adventures in the forest. An Ahir is most useful in an Ashram which has constantly to entertain visitors, for almost everyone will eat from his kitchen. For, as Eha says, 'his family having been connected for many generations with the sacred animal, the cow, he enjoys a certain consciousness of moral respectability, like a man whose uncles are deans or canons'

Ain i Akbari. Provided you have the patience to look for it, there is a lot of entertainment to be had from this

cannot be more than a source of entertainment to the villagers' Feel that this is likely to be only too true, and can but hope that I will also be a source of some entertainment to the readers, if any, of this diary, and that if we are not worthy to ask the prayers of St Francis, we may at least invoke the aid of Mr Pickwick.

Department, and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil fenced off in a closed coupe of its own and reserved entirely for the use of officials There you have Baiga Land, a country that seems utterly remote and

as they were. The Baigas, thirty seven thousand of them are to be found scattered all over the hills of Mandla, Bilaspur and Balaghat. Their villages are very different from the Gond villages. In the latter every house stands by itself in its own field, and normally a home consists of four little houses arranged about a

to the

—tiny

doors,

They

are not nearly so clean as the Gond houses The Baigas wear more clothes than they used to, but they still wear less than most people, and except when it is very cold they prefer to go practically naked For they were created immediately after the beginning of the world Their ancestors, Naga Baiga and Nagin Baigin, were born of serpents in the midst of the forest, and seeing their nakedness Parameshwar offered them a *dhoti nine* yards long But they refused it as being unnecessary, and some gods who were watching the scene remarked that they were not

Nanga Baigas (naked

jokes to be made abou

istic thing about the Baigas is not their nudity but their devotion to *bewar* cultivation. The Baiga selects a portion of the forest, fells the trees and sets the whole thing on fire. He sows his seed in the ashes, and after the rains, gets an excellent crop After doing this for some time, he moves on to another patch. The Forest Department was almost bound to interfere with this practice, and a block of twenty thousand acres was set

collection of records of the reign of Akbar Its references to the Gonds suggest that they were a good deal more important and prosperous than they are today, though the period of their supremacy had already passed. There were, for example, two great landlords, Hustee Rao 'whose country is over run by the tribe of Gond. Here are wild elephants,' and Beeja Rao who commanded fifty cavalry and three thousand infantry Doongur Khan commanded a similar number 'They are both of Gond tribe' Then there is a mysterious reference to Kullem, 'an ancient city, famous for buffaloes Near it is a zemindar named Bubjeo of the tribe of Gond, and he is also called Chanda He commands a thousand cavalry and forty thousand infantry In Beeragurh is a diamond mine, and here are manufactured flowered stuffs. It is dependent upon Bubjeo who has but lately conquered it. Near it are found wild elephants in great number'

AMARKANTAK The sacred hill which is the source of the Narbada and the Son, both holy rivers. It is said that Brahma shed two tears, one on each side of the hill, and from these tears the rivers took their rise It is today one of the dullest and dirtiest of all the pilgrim places of India over which Brahma now might well shed more tears than two with a few temples—several of them falling down a tumbledown bazaar a number of *dharmashala* or rest houses for pilgrims and a tank full of dirty water in which everyone takes a bath Once a year there is a great *mela* or festival, which is attended by large numbers of Gonds who take the opportunity to do a little shopping Amarkantak was given to the Raja of Rewa State in recognition of his services to the Government during the Indian Mutiny

ASHRAM A settlement, in which a number of people live together for religious or social service

BAIGAS. Imagine the Garden of Eden after the Fall Adam and Eve restored to a conditional tenancy in its glades and forests now ravaged by the sin of man, the whole area however neatly tidied up by the Forest

neck and planted it head downwards in the ground. It soon sprouted as the first of all bamboos.

BHIMA. A small sub-tribe of Gonds, living mainly in the Mandla and Seoni Districts. Like the Pardhans, they are musicians and dancers, but they look down on the Pardhans and refuse to eat with them One difference between the two tribes is that the Pardhans only beg from Gond houses, while the Bhimas will go anywhere; another difference is that the Pardhans play on the *kingri*, and the Bhimas on the *tuma* The *kingri* is a more elaborate instrument and tunes can be played on it, on the *tuma* it is only possible to make a rhythmic strumming to accompany the dance Lakshman made the first *kingri*, but Bhimsen made the first *tuma* The Bhimas have houses but only live in them during the rains, they have no fields. 'This is our field and bullocks,' they say, pointing to the *tuma*. They worship Bura Deo the great god of the Gonds, but they are not much concerned with the other Gond deities who are associated with the crops or the household. They indignantly rejected the suggestion that they were Hindus, although they celebrate many of the Hindu deities in their songs (but that is just custom, they said) and practise child marriage. They do not call Brahmins for their ceremonies, in fact their women refuse to eat from the hands of Brahmins, though they will eat with Gonds. Within the tribe, there are the regular exogamous septs, generally with Gond names, Marabi, Parteti, Markham, Durwa, Tekam. (This list is exactly the same as Russell's) If a girl associates with a Panka, she is put out of the tribe and is never taken back, but if she goes to a Pardhan she can be readmitted if she gives a feast. She must go down to the river, and a little of her hair is cut. Then cow-dung is thrown at her, and she is led across the river Then she returns, spreads a cloth on the ground, and the food is placed on it. The chief man of her sept eats first, and then the other members

aside for *bewar* This block is the Baiga Chowk in the Mandla District Here some seventy families have settled and still practise their ancient method of cultivation, though many of them have been persuaded to take to the plough But no Baigas plough save with a wistful heart. *Bewar* is their tradition, it is in their blood, it is the mark of their race, it is the sole reminder that they were once kings of the forest God Himself came to their great ancestors as they were eating roots in the jungle and showed them how to do *bewar*, giving them the first seeds with his own hands. The Baigas have a passionate love for *bewar* I have no doubt that this almost religious devotion is connected with their reverence for Mother Earth Now because of hunger and the strange laws of this Kali Yug, they have to dis honour her, lacerating her fair breasts with the plough

The Baigas are generally regarded with a certain amount of awe They are in great demand as priests and wizards for the Gonds They can turn you into a fox or jackal or cross a river by standing on leaves, or make a bit of wet rag stand upright in the air Only the Baiga can save your life if you have been unlucky enough to meet that dreadful snake with a red crest on its head which leaves a trail of fire behind it, the mere sight of which will turn you black and make you die in agony On more mundane matters the Baigas are less expert. When the first engine came along the line into the district a Baiga was found offering it a black cock under the impression that it was some evil spirit They are almost entirely illiterate Many of them can not add. They have no sense of measurement They say that a *kos* (normally two miles) is the distance between one pipe and the imperative desire for another A most romantic and interesting tribe, full of magic

BASOR. A small caste of workers in bamboo who make baskets, sieves, wooden flutes, winnowing fans and bamboo mats. They say that the first Basor in the days when there were no bamboos, took the snake from Siva's

A fire is burning in the court.
The lantern flickers in the house.
O my beloved I have spent the night with you.
And now the day has come, you must away
Before the frost falls on the village path
You must leave me.
But smile at me, beloved, sing me a new song before you go.

Our bed is painted red.
Red are the blankets.
For these four months of rain and happiness stay with me.
For four months remain with me
In the rains no one leaves his beloved.
If you go, I cannot eat, I cannot drink.
I will find no joy in anything
So stay for the months of rain and happiness with me.

BHIMSEN The cultus of Bhimsen is strange and interesting Originally one of the five Pandava brothers, he has been selected out of the entire body of Hindu legend for special honour by the aboriginal tribes. To the Baigas, he is the god of rain. To the Gonds, he is the embodiment of manly strength. He is associated mainly with rocks, mountains and rivers Not far from Karanjia are two hills one on each side of the valley. The story is that Bhimsen, carrying a *cowar*[1] like any Gond was walking up the valley, grew tired and dumped his two great loads on either side, whereupon they turned into the two hills, Dhuti and Lingo In the Lapha Zemindari of Bilaspur, the hills Chitogarh and Palma and Dhitori are all relics of Bhimsen. He went out to get fruit from the jungle; he had a *dhitori* (basket) in one hand, and two more in his *cowar* Some villagers came running and crying that his house was on fire, and he dropped his loads and made for home. The loads were petrified into the rocky hills that remain to this day According to the Bhumias, Bhimsen was present at the creation of the world.

[1] A *cowar* is a pole laid across the shoulders, from either end of which hangs a basket for carrying loads.

of the tribe follow suit, and she is readmitted to all her tribal privileges.

The Bhimas dance and sing very well. The women wear no ornaments and dress in Hindu style. An old man and woman danced and sang together in delightful fashion in the Ashram. They have a deep reverence for their *tuma*, and worship it at Dassera and in the spring. Bhimsen is their great hero, from whom they take their name. They sing both *bhajan* and *karma*; the *bhajan* are very conventional, but the *karma* have greater character. Here are a few examples.

As they plough the fields, the she-cobra hisses
O my darling, you are my life, you fill my thoughts
In your hands is my life, my death
But as the cobra hisses,
So will I if you are faithless

In his own village, he was harmless as a dove.
But since he came here, he has turned into a rat.
For as the rat bites its way into the store of grain,
So you have eaten your way into my heart

No other land is like our own
All other parts are strange as Bengal to us
If you desert this forest, what other will you find?
Come and weep with both your eyes.
While I was with you, I used to laugh
Laughing, I talked with you
But then I never thought that we would have to part
O stay—no other land is like our own

A young girl with waist so slender
I can put my fingers round it,
Is going down to the well for water
With swaying hips she goes
I think, and think, my life yearns with desire
Look, there she goes, see how her body sways.
Her pot is made of bronze and copper
There is water in the pot.
Look how the little darling goes,
Her waist so small I could put my fingers round it.

all as Kukra Deo was the most crabbed and ill favoured In those days Bhimsen wanted to dam up the Wainganga to make a fish pond, *so he began at night, for the deotas only work at night*, and he began to tear up the hills by the roots and *to throw* them down into the valley That big spur near the bend of the river is one, and the big hog backed hill where the Gurera Deo still lives, is *another A little gap only remained, the little gap* between the hills where the river still runs, and Bhimsen *toiled* hard, for if he could not do it before morning he would never be able *to do it at all. So he tore* up two hills by the roots and, *tying them to the ends of his staff, flung them* across his shoulder and carried them *down* to the river; but just before he got there the cock crew Bhimsen flung down his load in a rage, and there are the hills to this day; there, the conical ones out in the plain And he hurled away *his staff across the river; they say it is still* to be seen some thirty miles from here; *it is of stone, and is forty* paces long.

But the Wainganga went on in his course, *seeking* a wife, and at last won the lovely little Hirri.

As the Central Provinces abounds in curiously shaped hills, Bhimsen probably *receives almost* universal veneration.

CHHATTISGARHI Eastern Hindi includes three dialects, *Awadhi*, Bagheli and Chhattisgarhi Awadhi Bagheli (for the two are practically *the same*) is spoken in Mandla, but round Karanjia, which is *on the* borders of the [illegible] ...ilaspur, it is so [illegible] be almost indistin[illegible] is spoken by at least four million people in the C.P., *but* it has no literature worth the name.

DHIMAR A large caste of fishermen, water-carriers and domestic servants Apparently by origin an aboriginal tribe, the Dhimars have been promoted to a *position within* Hindu society that allows them to give food and water to *almost* anyone. Russell records a pleasant story about them. One day when Mahadev and Parvati were travelling, the goddess became very tired, so Mahadev created four men from

'The Great God sat in the midst of the primeval ocean, and made a crow from the rubbings of his body This crow Karicag, went here and there over the waters and at last found Kakramal Kuar, the great tortoise In his paw a tiny grain of earth was sticking The crow pecked it off and brought it to the Great God who said Sow it in the sea. In a few days the earth began to sprout and grew all over the ocean So God went to look at it taking his wife with him But the newly grown earth was unstable it shifted here and there, you couldn t stand on it So God sent for Bhimsen He was as usual going about, bent beneath his *couar* and when God told him of his perplexity he put down his loads one on either side of the earth and balanced it. After that the earth became firm Such is the account of creation that our Bhima visitors gave us The Bhimas also worship Bhimsen as the maker of the first *tuma* the *mohan baja*, the guitar of comfort, with which Sita was soothed when once she was enraged with Rama.

As the god of strength Bhimsen also tried to interfere with the course of rivers When the Narbada in a rage was running away from Amarkantak towards the sea Bhimsen tried to stop her first at Kapildhara—but she ran between his legs and leapt down a hundred feet —and then at Bhimkundi—but she changed herself into a fish burrowed into the ground and came up the other side of him After that say the Gonds Bhimsen got tired of the Narbada.

Equally unsuccessful was his attempt on the Wainganga Sterndale in his *Seoni, or Camp Life on the Satpura Range* relates a story that he heard from an old Baiga

In times long ago, before we Gonds came into existence and the country was peopled by *deotas* (i e gods) the [illegible] river was born and was to be married to the Wainganga. *Ah! in those days the* Wainganga was a finer river than it is now Bhimsen [illegible] he did There were Dongar Deo and Sunwar Deo and Kukra Deo and ever so many *deotas* but Bhimsen was the most powerful of

duly honoured, a wedding should never be marred by storm or rain, and that no one who first presented a share of his meal to Hardaul should ever want for food. Akbar complied with these requests and since that time Hardaul's ghost has been worshipped in every village.

Hardul's tomb gained a more sinister notoriety when Lord Hastings' army was encamped near his grove in Bundelkhand, and a cow was taken to be slaughtered beside the shrine. At once, it is said, cholera broke out in the camp, and spread all over India, only ceasing where shrines were erected to the outraged ghost. For this reason, Hardul is not only honoured at the time of marriage, but whenever there is an epidemic of any kind, but especially where there is cholera. Outside our village, Hardul Baba shares the shrine of Thakur Deo and Mother Earth

JAMNALAL BAJAJ One of the most honourable men in the India of his day Large, loving, lovable, great hearted Jamnalalji A man sparing of his speech, you felt that every word he uttered might be audited by a chartered accountant. He was for years President of the All India Spinners Association and Treasurer of the Indian National Congress. He took a leading part in Harijan work and village reconstruction. A man of princely wealth he lived in great simplicity It was from him that I first heard the word Gond, and in his house at Wardha that our work was originally planned.

KABIR CHABUTRA. In the extreme east of the Mandla District, at the meeting place of Mandla, Bilaspur and Rewa State It is only three miles from Amarkantak. It takes its name from Kabirdas, a leader of the Kabir panth sect of the Pankas. But if you expect anything exciting here, you will be disappointed. There is a very nice sign post by the roadside, and when we were there last a dead cow A long way off is an admirable dak bungalow where you can spend some pleasant days in the hot weather and the tiger shooting is good. But you mustn't expect to find anything of the atmosphere of that Kabir whose poems have been rewritten

Thakur Deo, thou art Hardulal, thou art the protector of our village. Tell us the truth.'

If the name is not apparent immediately, the same procedure is followed day after day. At last when it is known whether it was a witch or a spirit and who it was, promises are made, a bargain is struck and the day is fixed on which the price is to be paid.

Suppose the *gunia* has promised a black chicken. On the appointed day the villagers all go outside the village, and kindle a small fire, on which they burn ghee. They scatter rice on the ground, and hold the chicken above it. Then the *gunia* utters a *mantra*, and releases the chicken. If it eats the rice it is a sign that the offering has been accepted; if it refuses, perhaps it is not adequate, a goat may be required. Directly the chicken eats, the *gunia* breaks its neck, and sprinkles a little of the blood on the smoking ghee. All is over, the witch or spirit is appeased, and the man is free of his disease.

HARDUL BABA. The cult of Hardul Baba is even stranger than that of Bhimsen. For Bhimsen has a certain romantic dignity, there is an antiquity about him. But Hardul was simply a young Don Juan who tried to seduce his brother's wife and was poisoned for his pains. V. A. Smith has published an abstract of the *Legend of Hardaul*.

After the tragedy, it happened that the daughter of Kunjavati, the sister of Jhajhar and Hardaul, was about to be married Kunjavati accordingly sent an invitation to Jhajhar (who had done the poisoning) and requested him to attend the wedding. He refused, and mockingly replied that she had better invite her favourite brother Hardaul. Thereupon she went in despair to his tomb, and lamented aloud. Hardaul from below answered her cries, and said that he would come to the wedding and make all arrangements. The ghost kept his promise, and arranged the nuptials as befitted the honour of his house. Subsequently he visited at night the bedside of Akbar, and besought the Emperor to command *chabutras* to be erected and honour paid to him in every village throughout the Empire, promising that if he were

all the mountains of India to give a home to the Narbada, but as she was then unknown and obscure only the Maikal Hills responded. The Narbada is sometimes called *Maikal kanya* daughter of Maikal

Mandla District 'A tangled confusion of peak and range' this beautiful and remote district is bounded on the North by Jubbulpore and Rewa on the South by Balaghat, on the West by Seoni the scene of Kipling's *Jungle Books* and on the East by Bilaspur It is a high tableland, at the lowest thirteen hundred feet, rising to 3 454 feet which is the height of Dhuti a hill three miles distant from Karanjia. Mandla is a famous shooting district. Its rainfall is from 50 to 60 inches annually and the climate is good though the end of the rainy season is very unhealthy Its language is Gondi and the Baghels and Chhattisgarhi dialects of Eastern Hindi. Mandla is very sparsely populated and the area under cultivation is only twenty-one per cent. Gonds and other aboriginals form fifty four per cent of the population The district has fewer motor buses sent fewer people to jail during the Civil Disobedience Movement, and has almost the lowest density of population of all the districts in the Province.

Narbada This wonderful river flows from Amarkantak only eleven miles from Karanjia to Broach in the Bombay Presidency, a course of over eight hundred miles. It is said that it sprang from the body of Siva, and many people hold it to be even more sacred than the Ganges to have your sins forgiven, you must bathe in the Ganges it is enough to look at the Narbada. The *Rewa Purana* in fact, declared long ago that the Ganges would decrease in sanctity after the year 1895, and the Narbada would increase more and more. Many *sadhus* spend years of their life wandering up and down its banks, and it is an act of the very first piety to go on pilgrimage from the mouth of the river to its source and back again.

Panda A Panda is a successful and distinguished

so beautifully in English by Rabindranath Tagore and Evelyn Underhill, for he was never near the place.

KORKUS A delightful and interesting Munda tribe of the western districts of the C.P., some hundred and fifty thousand strong. They are now largely Hindu in outlook, and are more generally respected than other primitives, apparently because they worship the sun and moon which naturally gives them a good status. It is said that though there are no fewer than six different words meaning 'to wash' in the Korku language, the act itself is not common among them. But the Korkus I knew in Betul were very clean and decent people.

LAMANA, or Banjara. The caste of carriers and gipsies. Very picturesque and handsome. In many districts they are registered as a criminal tribe but in spite of their habit of stealing our goal posts for firewood they do not appear to be so regarded in Mandla. They worship Banjari Devi, and at the top of every pass, there is a great pile of stones that represents her. Whenever a Lamana passes he throws one more on to the heap.

MAHUA. *Bassia latifolia*. The seeds are made into oil and country liquor is distilled from the flowers. Liquor is regarded by the Gonds as a valuable febrifuge. 'have some brandy brother' they say to me when I get malaria. 'have some brandy and you'll be all right.' But I believe that it is only Vermouth which is really any use as a preventative for fever, and the Gonds of course, can't get that. Nor usually can I.

MAIKAL HILLS. A mountain range connecting the Vindhyas with the Satpuras; its forest-covered slopes and plateaus are now largely occupied by Gonds, though once many sages did penance here. Malkala Rishi was one. Kapila Muni was another. Vyasa, Brighu and Agastya are also named. So the Maikal Hills are sacred, both for the holy feet that trod them and also because they are the source of the Narbada and the Son. The *Markandeya Purana* tells how Siva called on

all the mountains of India to give a home to the Narbada, but as she was then unkno[illegible]n and obscure only the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] e Narbada is [illegible] of Maikal [illegible] beautiful and remote [illegible] on of peak and on the North by Jubbulpore and Rewa on the South district is bounded by Balaghat, on the West by Seoni, the scene of Kipling's *Jungle Books*, and on the East by Bilaspur It is a high tableland, at the lowest thirteen hundred feet, rising to 3 454 feet, which is the height of Dhuti, a hill three miles distant from Karanjia. Mandla is a famous shooting district. Its rainfall is from 50 to 60 inches annually and the climate is good though the end of the rainy season is very unhealthy Its language is Gondi and the Bagheli and Chhattisgarhi dialects of Eastern Hindi. Mandla is very sparsely populated and the area under cultivation is only twenty-one per cent. Gonds and other aboriginals form fifty four per cent of the population. The district has fewer motor buses, sent fewer people to jail during the Civil Disobedience Movement and has almost the lowest density of population of all the districts in the Province.

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PANDA. A *Panda* is a successful and distinguished

gunia There is no difference in his functions. He is literally a medicine-man

PANKA A caste of weavers and village watchmen numbering over two hundred thousand in the C.P the majority of whom have become Kabirpanthis. They are rather despised by the Gonds who like to make jokes about them, but they are a very clever and alert people, and with proper education would go far

PENDRA ROAD. An unpleasant little town largely occupied by birds of prey, on the Bilaspur Katni line It is the railway station for Karanjia from which it is happily thirty three miles distant The building of this railway was not easy for above all other difficulties a *sadhu* assisted by two enormous snakes opposed its construction and so bewitched the labourers on the line that many of them fell ill

RATS In Mandla District there is a village called Chotikhai the rat s hole Long ago the gods invited the whole world to dinner But just as they were about to sit down to the banquet a rat scuttled across the room and all the Gonds present at once began to chase it They followed it as far as Chotikhai where it escaped into its hole When the Gonds returned they found that the other guests had eaten all the dinner So they picked up the scraps that remained mixed a little water with them and ate the mixture which they called *pej* and which they have eaten ever since

RUSSELL TRIBES AND CASTES OF THE CENTRAL PROVINCES OF INDIA. This is the standard work on the tribes of the Central Provinces, perhaps just a little out of date now with a certain number of gaps in its information and its account of the Gonds marred by muddling up the Marias Raj Gonds and other Gonds all in one unwieldy article

SAJ *Terminalia tomentosa.* The sacred dwelling place of Bura *Deo* the Great God of the Gonds There is no oath more binding than one taken on a twig of the holy *saj*

THAKUR DEO A benignant old spirit the husband

of Mother Earth, who protects villages and crops. H is honoured by a white goat or a white cock. In Bila pur, he is worshipped at the Pola Festival, and sacrifice are made to him for the advantage of the crops. From time to time, it is believed that Thakur Deo gets lost and then the villagers take a boy and put some magic powder into his eyes. The boy goes out to look for the vanished deity, and at last returns with a handful of pebbles the form in which Thakur Deo is accustomed to dwell. These are placed in a bowl of milk, and are supposed to swell. But one of the pebbles disappears, and the boy is again sent to look for it. This time he finds it in the shrine, and this is regarded as proof that the god has returned. (*Bilaspur District Gazetteer*.) Thakur Deo is not to be confused with—

THAKKER BABA. One of the best men in India, Mr Amritlal V Thakkur. Founder of the Bhil Seva Mandal, the general secretary of the Harijan Seva Sangha (the organization that carries on work for the 'untouchables' all over India) a tireless traveller, a wise counsellor, a liberal thinker, a delightful friend. He died in 1951.

TIGERS. In his article on Korkus, Russell has some remarks on tigers which are so interesting that I cannot resist reproducing them here.

The fat of a tiger is considered to be an excellent medicine for rheumatism and sprains, and much store is set by it. The tiger's tongue is also supposed to be a very powerful tonic for weakly children. It is cooked, pounded up and a small quantity administered in milk or water. When a tiger has been killed the Gonds and Korkus will singe off his whiskers as they think this will prevent the tiger's spirit from haunting them. Another idea is that the whiskers if chopped up and mixed in the food of an enemy will poison him. They frequently object to touch a man who has been injured or mauled by a tiger, as they think that to do so would bring down the tiger's vengeance upon them. And in some places any Gond who touches a man mauled by a tiger is put temporarily out of caste and has to be purified and given a feast on readmission.

Venereal Disease. I make no apology for my frequent and open references to this, for it is one of the most obvious facts of tribal life in this area. It is not spread by prostitution, which is unknown, but is due to the very free sexual habits of the tribes. The usual official returns for the incidence of the diseases are far too low, for since the Gonds regard them as the result of witchcraft—if a woman gives a man syphilis that proves she is a witch—they do not usually go to dispensaries for treatment. Mr Grigson says of the conditions in Bastar State (where there is an overwhelming majority of Maria and Muria Gonds) that 'the almost universal opinion of the score of medical practitioners in the State is that venereal disease is not truly endemic among the aboriginals, but is spread among them by petty Hindu and Mohammedan officials, traders, etc.' Our experience has been that the Gonds are more frequently afflicted with a simple and uncomplicated type of gonorrhœa, generally becoming chronic; while syphilis is more common among the lower Hindu castes who work as labourers side by side with the Gonds. This may be due to the fact that there is very little connexion between the Gonds and their Hindu neighbours, and if the Gonds once got gonorrhœa it would spread right round the tribe, but not beyond it. The aboriginals respond very quickly to treatment, and our own villagers have come to believe very strongly in injections, so much so that they demand injections for every conceivable disease. In Karanjia fully seventy five per cent of the people are affected with venereal disease, and it is the gravest of problems to know how to deal with it. Of course, the original Syphilus was a peasant. In Fracastor's poem on the Morbus Gallicus, he describes how the shepherd Syphilus enraged the god Apollo by his evil deeds, and was punished by a new disease to which he gave his name. The Gonds of Chanda and Bastar suffer greatly from yaws, a disease which, though not venereal, resembles syphilis in its manifestations and responds readily to the same treatment.

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